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**EVALUATING AND SUPPORTING THE INTERCULTURAL  
CAPABILITIES OF PHARMACY UNDERGRADUATES**

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**Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## Abstract

The thesis takes a human development approach to the potential value of international higher education. It evaluates the intercultural capabilities of UK and international pharmacy students in one university. As graduates and professional pharmacists these students will serve a diverse population of patients and work in multi-professional, multi-skilled and multi-cultural teams. Despite internationalised higher education offering a multicultural space in which students could forge a more global outlook, the reality found was that the potential is not realised in the case of many students.

The notion of ‘cosmopolitanism’, conceptualised by Kwame Anthony Appiah as an obligation to value, respect and seek understanding of others who are different from us, was used as a basis for imagining the goals of the internationalised university. The capability approach, founded by Amartya Sen and developed by Martha Nussbaum, was employed to frame and evaluate the development of students’ cosmopolitan values. In this approach, social justice is served by promoting individuals’ freedoms - termed ‘capabilities’ - to be, to do and to achieve what they themselves consider to be of value. The original capability sets referred to the whole of human living, as a way of reconceptualising poverty reduction and subsequently it was taken up in education to express educational goals in terms of the development of capabilities.

Drawing on this work, for the purposes of this thesis, a novel intercultural capability set that identifies the key attributes of being more cosmopolitan-aware was formulated. The framework was constructed iteratively by first drawing up a set suggested by reading and then testing and modifying it as interview data was analysed. The four final overarching capabilities are: *Social Relations and Participation*; *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*; *Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection*. Each capability has a number of attributes that allowed the building up of a nuanced picture of the intercultural capability of the students who were the focus of the study.

A series of 42 semi-structured interviews with 44 home and international pharmacy students explored their experiences and perceptions of an international educational environment. Analysis revealed a spectrum of intercultural capability amongst the students, in terms of the extent and type of capabilities and in terms of their functioning as people with cosmopolitan values. While some students had flourished through having been able to maximise opportunities in the internationalised environment to use and expand their capabilities to a significant extent, others were less able, either because of their initial capabilities or because of the constraining circumstances in which they found themselves. It was evident that the development of intercultural capability was effortful, but those students who were willing to make the effort appeared to connect its value with their own and other’s well-being. The possession of the capability and functioning of *Social Relations and*

*Participation* was fundamental to enabling the development of other intercultural capabilities.

Further analysis, taking case studies of two individual students who appeared to possess little intercultural capability and two who appeared to possess high levels of intercultural capability, revealed the personal and situational factors which allowed students to experience intercultural contact and friendships as transformative and enriching, while others found themselves disempowered, frustrated and limited by social and pedagogical arrangements; there were barriers to their freedom to develop and flourish as more intercultural beings.

Social and educational arrangements can have a significant effect upon capability development and functioning. It was found that group working can act to support or hinder intercultural capability. The creation of a curricular space which provided the opportunity for collaboration and exchange, for some students had a profound effect upon the development of their personal and professional outlook and values, through exploration and development of a more cosmopolitan-aware self.

The thesis concludes by proposing that an intercultural capability set provides a powerful theoretically and empirically informed tool for evaluating the extent to which home and international students are and can become interculturally capable within the higher education environment and for identifying factors which enable or constrain their capabilities. Such an evaluation is a step towards understanding how higher education might enrich the student experience and produce professionals and global citizens of value to society as a whole.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background and Context

The focus of this thesis is the development of intercultural capabilities in university undergraduate pharmacy students. It takes the case of 44 UK and international MPharm students at a UK university who are learning to become professional pharmacists in the context of the increasing internationalisation of higher education. The population of patients and public with whom they come into contact is also likely to be highly varied in terms of social and cultural background and they are expected to practise in multi-professional, multi-skilled and multi-cultural teams. In the thesis I argue that the development of a more cosmopolitan outlook and intercultural capability in students has current and future value both for the individual and for the good of the profession and society. The students in this study, as potential pharmacists, are in a position to influence the health and well-being of others through their decisions, values and behaviours. In this context I introduce capabilities as an organising principle by which to consider the extent and development of cosmopolitan values within a population of pharmacy students.

I am a registered pharmacist - and the stimulus for this research arose through my role as lecturer within a UK School of Pharmacy which is the site of the study. My career as a pharmacist has been in two main areas of practice: community pharmacy and academia. Initially practising in community pharmacy, I became one of the first 'teacher-practitioners' - joint initiatives between universities and community pharmacy companies. Within a few years I was invited to become a member of academic staff within the School of Pharmacy. Throughout much of my time in academia I continued to practise as a *locum* community pharmacist, which enabled me to keep abreast of clinical and professional developments at first hand.

The profession of pharmacy within the UK is regulated by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). The majority of the approximately 50,000 registered pharmacists practise in community pharmacy (70%) and hospital pharmacy (20%). The remainder hold roles in areas such as industry, NHS primary care organisations, academia, prisons or training. In order to register with the GPhC, applicants must normally hold an MPharm degree, which provides a professional education as well as a scientific and clinical training, from an accredited UK university; have successfully completed a 52-week period of pre-registration training; and passed the GPhC registration examination.

In 2004 I was asked to be part of the team responsible for developing a joint MPharm course in my School with an international campus in Malaysia. This was a so-called '2+2 course', in which students spend the first two years of their degree at a university in Malaysia, studying equivalent modules to those

taught in the first two years of the course in the 'home' School of Pharmacy in the UK, before joining the UK cohort mid-way through the course. The course is accredited by the GPhC, as well as the Malaysian Pharmacy Board. Involved with the necessary arrangements that were being made in terms of standards and quality, I began to feel concerned about possible problems of adjustments for the students when the transition to the UK was made. This interest in the students' well-being provided the original stimulus for my research.

Data was gathered through a series of 42 interviews with 44 home and international students. Early in the study I talked with 12 students as a pilot. However, as I explored links between the research literature and initial findings from the pilot interviews, it became evident that how students of different nationalities and cultures interacted was of relevance to *all* students within internationalised higher education. Having been primarily concerned with the 2+2 course and Malaysia Campus students, it became clear to me that I should consider the issue of intercultural relationships as it applied across the whole student population. I was led to theories of cosmopolitanism as I developed an interest in and understanding of the potential of education to foster the acquisition of intercultural competence<sup>1</sup>, and came to frame my work in terms of 'capabilities' for being interculturally competent, arguing for an educational experience which gives attention to opportunities for students to develop the values of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. This shift in thinking necessitated a change from the original research questions<sup>2</sup>, with the main question having become: 'To what extent do students on the MPharm course display intercultural competence?'

In order to address this overarching question the research questions used to frame development of my research plan and interviews were:

- What do students understand by intercultural contact?
- What are the students' experiences of intercultural contact?
- What factors influence the extent and nature of intercultural contact?

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<sup>1</sup> By which I mean that I went beyond the definition of intercultural competence usually found in the literature which, gained through intercultural relationships or intercultural education, describes an attitudinal and behavioural state of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, an ability to communicate interculturally and to reflectively compare one's situation to that of others. My interpretation encompasses the four intercultural capabilities of *Social Relations and Participation, Respect, Dignity and Recognition, Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection*.

<sup>2</sup> Original research questions were:  
What is the experience of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?  
What is the experience of the UK Campus students of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?  
What are the experiences of UK and Malaysia Campus staff (academic, technical and administrative) of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?  
What effect will the Malaysia campus students have upon the School of Pharmacy, its students and staff?

- What factors influence the extent and nature of intercultural learning?
- To what extent does the pedagogy within the MPharm promote or inhibit intercultural learning?
- In what way does the experience of the MPharm course prepare students for working in an intercultural professional pharmacy environment / as interculturally competent pharmacists?

The overall purpose of my study is, therefore, to explore how higher education can be promoted as a space in which students can learn more about culturally-different others and themselves and, in so doing, come to realise and themselves promote, the values of a more cosmopolitan-aware pharmacist and individual.

## **1.2 Finding Normative Bases: Cosmopolitanism and the Capability Approach**

My work draws on two main theoretical concepts, which informed my thinking and the way in which I analysed the data: cosmopolitanism and the capability approach. These normative concepts help to define and shape the philosophy and principles of an educational environment which fosters a recognition and concern for others and their well-being. The construction of cosmopolitanism, as conceptualised by Kwame Anthony Appiah (1998, 2006), is a justice based-approach that recognises the plurality of societies, cultures and identities and aims to foster respect and concern for others who are different from ourselves. It provides the means for understanding, translating and communicating across differences and recognises the potential to be influenced by and to learn from a whole gamut of cultures, communities, people and practices (Appiah 2006; Hall 2002; Nussbaum 1997). Similar cosmopolitan concepts have been applied to the field of higher education by Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2002), who argues the case for an education based on what she sees as essential capacities for global citizenship, namely: the capacity for critical examination of oneself and one's traditions (the 'examined life'); the ability to see oneself as a 'world citizen', bound to others by ties of recognition and concern; and the ability to think what it might be like in the shoes of another (the 'narrative imagination').

I suggest that engagement with the principles of cosmopolitanism through education can provide a route by which students can start to explore their identities and values. I have chosen to conceptualise and frame the way in which this does and could happen through application of the 'capability approach'. The 'capability approach', developed initially by Amartya Sen (1992, 1993, 1999, 2009) and further progressed by Martha Nussbaum (2000), arises from a concern for justice and human relations and is founded on promoting the quality and value of the lives of individuals through offering freedom and choice. A capability represents an opportunity, a potential or a freedom to do or be what one considers valuable. The actual exercising or expression of capability - termed 'functioning' - is affected by circumstance,

including choices made by others. Hence justice and fairness are crucial considerations in the enabling of one's own and other's capabilities.

As a way of making capabilities more tangible and applicable to situations, Martha Nussbaum created a set of central capabilities for human living (Nussbaum 2000)<sup>3</sup>. Drawing upon these ideas, others have examined some areas of education, including professional and higher education, through the lens of capabilities and have created capability sets to frame what they consider essential capabilities in these contexts (Flores-Crespo 2007; Terzi 2007a; Vaughan 2007; Walker 2006; Walker et al. 2009; Walker and Unterhalter 2007). I used the philosophies and structures of these models to inform my thinking about the capabilities needed for being intercultural in a professional higher education setting. Drawing upon this, on theories of cosmopolitanism and capabilities and upon the empirical data, I have formulated a provisional capability set for being intercultural. My purpose for developing the model is two-fold. As well as providing a tool for evaluating the intercultural capabilities of students, it could also be a mechanism by which to shed light on how the educational environment might be structured for enabling intercultural learning and capability development. The four overarching capabilities in the set are: *Social Relations and Participation*; *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*; *Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection*.

### **1.3 Position of my Study within the Research Field**

Within the field of international and intercultural higher education there is a range of studies of undergraduate student experiences. A majority of these, particularly earlier studies, primarily consider the experiences of international students, especially the extent to which and how they are able to accommodate different educational and social cultures of the university, including their interactions with other students. Despite a broadening of focus, the research to date on the perspectives and experiences of domestic, as opposed to international, students in the internationalised higher education environment, is still somewhat lacking (Caruana and Spurling 2007; Dunne 2009; Peacock and Harrison 2009), yet is a vital part of the whole picture. More recent literature has shifted the focus from the adjustments which must be made by the (international) students to those which should be made within the higher education environment – seen as benefitting not only international students, but the academic community as a whole. This has given rise to studies on the extent to which and how undergraduate students are able to develop intercultural competence, which is defined as being a form of behaviour or state of being. It depends upon the acquisition of a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes (Bredella 2003; Byram 2003; Lasonen 2005; Otten 2003; Sen Gupta 2003) and involves experiencing others and their situations, in order to be able to reflect upon, analyse and act upon those experiences (Alred et al.

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<sup>3</sup> Martha Nussbaum's central human capabilities list is: Life; Bodily Health; Bodily Integrity; Senses, Imagination and Thought; Emotions; Practical Reason; Affiliation; Other Species; Play; Control over One's Environment.

2006a; Bredella 2003). Research on the dynamics of student interactions and views of students about multicultural group work, the focus of Chapter 7, have been done in a variety of undergraduate settings, though notably in courses which involve a business focus, and point to a range of experiences for both home and international students. These studies employ a number of different indicators of the extent to which and how students do or don't interact and develop interculturally; there is no consistent tool that allows comparisons and judgements to be made.

I therefore offer capabilities as a novel and useful approach to make consistent, meaningful evaluations. This thesis is, as far as I am aware, the first empirical case study to apply capabilities to the field of intercultural education; to develop and test a novel capability set for intercultural capability and to examine intercultural capability in a cohort of pharmacy students. Although this study explored the case of students on a specific course at one university, my intention was that it would act as an example, with an approach that could be applied more widely to the field of international higher education.

The chapters that present findings from empirical data highlight some key findings with respect to the development of intercultural capability. Firstly, students' opportunity and ability to develop interculturally vary immensely and are affected by a range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Secondly, educational arrangements can have a marked effect upon opportunity for capability development. Thirdly, the acquisition of intercultural capability often requires effort and a negotiation between the perceived short-term and long-term gains from intercultural relationships. Intercultural development is a value, particularly for the long term; however, it often necessitates a trade-off between efficiency in the short-term and capability development in the long-term. Students' initial intercultural capability affects how they manage and view intercultural relationships, which subsequently affects the extent to which they, and hence others, are likely to develop interculturally. Fourthly, *Social Relations and Participation* emerged as a foundational capability which is at the heart of being able to develop interculturally. Akin to Martha Nussbaum's 'affiliation' (Nussbaum 2000; Nussbaum 2011), it creates the basis upon which other intercultural capabilities can be developed in the creation of a more interculturally capable individual.

#### **1.4 Thesis Structure**

The context of the research is set out in Chapter 2, which discusses the internationalised higher education arena, providing a commentary on how the increasingly internationalised nature of higher education, shaped by demands of governments, higher education policy developers and students, has led to a perceived shift from a value-driven towards a more market-driven approach. It considers the student perspective on the internationalised higher education experience, in particular that of international students. It observes that, although the internationalised higher education environment provides rich potential for intercultural learning and development of more cosmopolitan-

aware selves, the reality is that many students live largely parallel lives, with little meaningful interaction between cultural groups. For some international students, the reality of international study does not fulfil their expectations in terms of making wider friendships, notably with students from the host culture. Finally the chapter considers the education of pharmacists and offers an overview of the profession of pharmacy and how pharmacists are educated and trained.

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical background for my research, namely, cosmopolitanism and the capability approach, fundamental to both of which is a respect and concern for the lives and well-being of others. The chapter sets out cosmopolitanism values of respect and understanding of those who are different from ourselves, firstly as theorised by Appiah (1998, 2006) and secondly, as applied by Nussbaum (1997, 2000) to the field of higher education. I discuss the interplay of culture and the concept of the self, or identity, and how becoming more cosmopolitan aware stimulates an examination and (re)formation of the self. As a means of conceptualising and framing the development of such values in students I introduce the capability approach, initially envisaged by Amartya Sen (1992, 1993, 1999, 2009) as an approach to thinking about poverty deprivation. I propose it as a justice-centred means of evaluating conditions that enable students to maximise opportunities and take decisions based on what they have reason to value.

Chapter 4, which provides an outline and justification for the methodological approach and methods used in my research, describes how I have drawn upon theory and empirical data to propose a capability set for being intercultural. The chapter contains an account of how my personal involvement with a novel MPharm course and practice as a pharmacist and academic provided the stimulus for and also shaped the progression of the study. I describe how conducting the pilot study interviews, alongside my reading and consideration of theory and studies of students in internationalised higher education, provoked a shift in focus of my research, as well as the development of my method of data analysis, through the lens of capability. Ethical considerations about the way in which the data was gathered were of paramount importance, given my position relative to the student participants, as a teacher on the MPharm course.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 contain the analysis and discussion of findings from the interviews with students. Analysis of the data against the proposed capability set provided a consistent tool by which I could examine findings at both group and individual levels and make suggestions about the personal, relational and situational factors which impinge upon capability development. The capability set proved to be a good measure of intercultural capabilities and in Chapter 5 I show how it was used to illuminate the spectrum of intercultural capability in existence across the student population studied. At one extreme were students who had benefitted greatly from the internationalised higher education environment, having discovered enjoyment and self-development through their intercultural encounters. At the other extreme was evidence of missed

opportunity for students who, for a variety of reasons, had been unable to take similar advantage of the situation, constrained as they were by circumstances largely out of their control, by the actions of others or by their own attitudes.

In order to examine more closely some of the factors which appear to influence capability development, Chapter 6 takes the case of four students, from extreme ends of the spectrum illustrated in Chapter 5. I show the effects of this for the individual in terms of development of their personal and professional identities and the values and attitudes that accompany them, as graduates and potential pharmacists, into society.

Using the example of group work, which arose many times during interviews, Chapter 7 illustrates how pedagogy can be supportive of or can hinder intercultural relationship formation and subsequent intercultural capability development. A curricular space, in which students are allowed freedom for respectful participation with culturally-different others, provides opportunities to discover the value that can be gained through development of a more interculturally capable, cosmopolitan-aware self. Although a recurring theme, I kept discussion of group work relatively brief within Chapters 5 and 6, as it is the subject of Chapter 7.

I conclude by drawing together the main findings from my study, as I link the picture gleaned from the empirical data with theories of cosmopolitanism and capabilities. I show how application of the capability approach can be used to evaluate intercultural capability development and educational arrangements which promote this. I finally suggest, in the light of my findings, recommendations for pedagogical practice within higher education and considerations for employing the capability set for further enquiry.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Internationalised Higher Education**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the internationalised higher education arena as the context for my study. My research was carried out in a university which has a strong reputation for internationalisation activities, including international campuses, with relatively high proportions of international students and staff<sup>4</sup>. The School of Pharmacy in which the study was based has a relatively high proportion of international students (about 25% in years 1 and 2, and 60% in years 3 and 4). Within the chapter I discuss firstly how globalisation, along with having brought about change in structures and processes, has changed some of the drivers and rationales with higher education. Secondly, I consider the student in internationalised higher education, recognising both the benefits and difficulties encountered, in particular concerning their experiences of each other within an internationalised environment. In the final part of the chapter I present an overview of pharmacy professional education in Great Britain, this being the subject of my study. Specifically, I describe the MPharm course at the research site.

#### **2.2 The Internationalisation of Higher Education**

I start by exploring some aspects of the increasingly internationalised nature of higher education. I will consider some of the main drivers behind the process; the opportunities, challenges and conflicts presented by these changes and how the interplay of these might ultimately impinge upon the student. I will argue that, despite the market created by the growing need for provision of knowledge and skills in a global economy, a balance must be struck between maintaining a competitive edge and efficient, profitable education systems, and the public good role of higher education.

#### **2.3 Globalisation and Internationalisation**

Globalisation is said to be one of the key social, political and economic forces of this century which acts at the core of economic, political, social and cultural systems across the globe (Giddens 1998; Held et al. 1999; Weldon et al. 2011). It is widely argued that economies and societies are being transformed as globalisation challenges, breaks down and re-shapes understandings of national borders, political systems and cultural and behavioural norms, and national and local identities (Held et al. 1999; Weldon et al. 2011). There would appear to be a contradictory dynamic as the processes of globalisation have brought about a more interconnected and interdependent world (Giddens 1998; Held et al. 1999; Knight 2008; OECD 2007; Yang 2002) yet, at the same time, reinforced current and created new social and economic

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<sup>4</sup> International students make up 27% of the total student population (17% of undergraduate students). About 20% of university staff are international.

inequalities, divisions and conflicts (Giddens 1998; Held et al. 1999; Unterhalter and Carpentier 2010).

The impact of an increasingly global environment upon higher education is inescapable and, under the umbrella of globalisation, higher education systems, policies and institutions are being challenged and remodelled. By definition, universities are and always have been international institutions but, in the current climate, the picture of internationalised higher education is being formed and re-formed by how universities, governments and other bodies react to the challenges, opportunities and threats posed by globalisation.

‘Internationalisation’ is a term used to describe the policies, processes and practices which have been and continue to be developed within higher education in the global climate. The ‘internationalisation of higher education’ has become both a response to and an agent of globalisation; is it seen as a chance to seize upon and exploit opportunities, but bringing with it problems and challenges (Altbach 2004; Knight 2008).

## **2.4 The Expansion of Internationalisation of Higher Education**

There is a strong perception that the ability to survive and compete in a globalised world has become increasingly dependent upon the creation and acquisition of internationally-transferable knowledge, skills and innovation, as intellectual capital has become recognised and promoted as an important factor in economic success (Naidoo 2003; OECD 2008a; World Bank 2000). In this context, higher education is recognised as having a pivotal role to play in equipping individuals for the needs of the market and for society (Bourn et al. 2006; Knight 2008; Naidoo 2003; OECD 1999; OECD 2008c). Within an arena of liberalisation of global trade policies, a growing need for internationally-recognised qualifications, developments in information and communications technology and increased mobility of people (DUIS 2007; Knight 2008), governments and institutions are having to explore and devise new strategies for the internationalisation of higher education. The whole educational process has become more mobile, with more fluid movement of students, institutions, staff, programmes, research and knowledge. During the past 10-15 years higher education has witnessed growing numbers of international networks, students and staff studying or working abroad; offshore campuses and partnerships; developments in virtual learning; courses with an international component and a greater emphasis on developing intercultural or global competencies (Altbach 2004; Altbach 2009; Ennew and Greenaway 2012; Knight 2008).

‘International’ higher education formerly implied, and was largely associated with, international student recruitment. The term ‘internationalisation’, however, is broader, describing institutions, policies, processes, pedagogies and values – interpreted differently according to perspective and context (Callan 1998; Montgomery 2010). One of the most widely accepted and quoted definitions of internationalisation, which encompasses the overall holistic intent, is (Knight 2008:21) ‘the process of integrating an international,

intercultural and global dimension into the purpose, functions (teaching, research and service) and delivery of higher education at the institutional and national levels'. Internationalisation is viewed by some as implying cooperation between nations (i.e. inter-nation) amidst, and despite, the competitive environment created through processes of globalisation, which is respectful of national differences and traditions and beneficial through establishing links, enhancing understanding and improving quality of education (CVCP/HEFCE 2000; Gacel-Avila 2005; Knight 2004; Kreber 2009; Trahar 2010a). Others emphasise the importance of the intercultural element, seen in the quotation above, in broadening the outlook and attitudes of staff, students and the wider university community, rather than being process-driven (Deardorff 2006; IAU 2012; Knight 2004; Marginson and van der Wende 2007; Montgomery 2010; Otten 2003; Stone 2006).

Strategies for and aspects of internationalisation are many and varied and are interpreted and used in different ways and to different ends by the various stakeholders. At the highest level there is the infrastructure within nations, governments and institutions which allows and shapes the development of internationalised education (British Council 2011; DEA 2001; OBHE 2011; OECD 2008b; OECD 2011; PMI2 2006; PMI 1999). With an increasing demand for internationally-recognised qualifications, government policies have been developed in order to boost participation rates – in wealthy industrialised nations, to maintain a competitive edge; in developing and low income countries, to survive. With respect to capacity-building, cross-border education can contribute to growth and development for low income countries, as well as being economically important, where there are insufficient tertiary education places or staff to meet demand. The need to provide education for students who cannot afford expensive fees or who cannot or choose not to travel, has driven the development of new 'transnational' systems of education such as branch campuses, twinning programmes and distance and e-learning courses (Knight 2008; OBHE 2009). Rapid developments in information technology have had a huge impact on the ability to deliver education more widely, at less cost. The creation of virtual programmes has opened up access to an (international) education without students having to leaving their home country. From a capacity-building perspective, it allows transmission and access of information to materially poor countries, where little local education infrastructure exists, potentially enabling individuals to use the knowledge for practical and economic development (Naidoo 2007; OECD 2004; OECD 2008a). Activity-based ventures include development of international partnerships and research projects and collaborative networks, student and staff mobility, international student recruitment activities and the provision of support structures within institutions for these activities (British Council 2011; U21 2011; UKCISA 2011). The concept of 'Internationalisation at Home' (Crowther et al. 2000; Montgomery 2010; Teekens 2003; Trahar 2010b) aims to respond to the need or desire for providing a global perspective within higher education by adding an international dimension within institutions for students and staff who are not mobile. It includes, for example, drawing on the resources provided by the presence of internationally and culturally varied

students and staff; providing international dimensions within curricula; promoting pedagogy which fosters intercultural learning; or developing links with projects abroad.

Since the 1990s there has been an overall expansion in uptake of higher education in most countries (Naidoo 2003; OECD 2012), with education becoming accessible to a wider cross-section of society. During that time uptake of higher education overall has increased by 25%, with a sharp rise of 78% since 2,000. The increase in uptake of higher education amongst international students (i.e. students who move to another country to study), however, has been much greater, with a 5-fold increase over the past 25 years, and a doubling of numbers since 2000 (OECD 2012; UNESCO 2009)<sup>5</sup>. Currently, over half these international students are from Asia and over 40% studying in the EU, followed by over 19% in North America. Elsewhere, the fastest growing areas are currently Latin America, East Asia and the Pacific region (OECD 2012; UNESCO 2009; UNESCO 2012). China, as well as sending a steadily increasing number of international students, is also attracting international students – now accounting for about 5% of the global market. There has been a notable rise in uptake, which is likely to continue, of higher education amongst students from middle and low income countries<sup>6</sup>, who tend to study abroad as their countries cannot develop provision for education at the same pace as the increase in demand (OECD 2012; UNESCO 2009; World Bank 2000).

The UK is second only to the US as a destination for study for international students and is the major provider of international higher education within Europe. Numbers of international students studying in the UK have doubled since 2000 (with a concomitant increase in home student numbers by about one-fifth). Students from outside the UK account for over 17% of the student population, with over 12% from outside the EU. However there is a greater number of students enrolled with UK institutions studying offshore. Transnational education accounts for 54% of international student enrolments and, estimated to be growing at about 10% per annum, is of extreme value to the UK (HESA 2012; Naidoo 2009).

## **2.5 The Dual Potential of Internationalisation: Commercial Gain versus Educational Value**

The role of universities in the global supply and flow of knowledge, understanding and skills is becoming increasingly important as the rise of a

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<sup>5</sup> In 2011 there were 4.1 million international students, representing 2.7% of the global total number of students in higher education (OECD 2012). Fifty-two per cent of these international students are from Asia, with largest numbers from China, followed by India and Korea.

<sup>6</sup> Low and middle income countries are defined by the World Bank based on gross national income per capita (World Bank 2012) and includes countries in Central and South America, Africa, Central and East Asia and Eastern Europe.

global knowledge-based economy and society has increased the demand for education, in particular post-secondary academic and professional education and training. However it is evident that some of the motivations and rationales behind internationalisation are not necessarily aligned. The prime drivers appear to be economic and political which, in the view of some, are to the detriment of educational, social and cultural motivations. As internationalised higher education has become an increasingly competitive and important business sector in its own right there is a risk of the public good role becoming lost within efforts to maintain market position (Haigh 2008; Harris 2009; Knight 2004; Knight 2011b; Naidoo 2003; Naidoo and Jamieson 2005; Ng 2012), as I now discuss.

### ***2.5.1 Educational and Social Value***

Higher education has traditionally been viewed as a ‘public good’ or ‘social responsibility’, as well as a ‘private good’ (Jonathan 2001; Knight 2008; Marginson 2004; Naidoo 2003). From the literature the main aims of a higher education are: production of knowledge and understanding; preparation for professional or vocational service; addressing issues of justice, equality and democracy; promotion of citizenship; transmission, interpretation, guardianship and sensitive development of values, culture and cultural knowledge; an appreciation of the global perspective; to benefit the economy and society, and to be a vehicle for self-transformation (Barnett 2008; Barnett and Coate 2005; Cowan 2005; Dearing 1997; Delanty 2001; McLean 2008; Nussbaum 2002; Walker 2006; Williams 2005).

It could be argued that, as a public good, education should be provided as equitably as possible in order to boost the chances of as many individuals as possible, not only on a national but also on a global scale. Higher education provides the knowledge, skills and training across all fields which is demanded by a global society and, whilst at an individual level their acquisition enhances social and employment prospects, at a societal level, the availability of knowledge and skills within the population as a whole rises, which is recognised as being required for innovation and growth in a knowledge-based economy (UNESCO 2009). Higher education can also be a factor in driving social change and progress through, not only intellectual, but also ethical and moral stimulation and debate (Gacel-Avila 2005; Nussbaum 1997; UNESCO 1998). The internationalisation agenda provides potential to enhance this through widening students’ experiences; promoting core values; adding educational and cultural value to an institution through development of intercultural skills and understanding; addressing intellectually and morally stimulating global challenges and enhancing research knowledge and capacity (Altbach and Knight 2007; Bruch and Barty 1998; DEA 2005; SHRE and CIHE 2007). Drawing on the potential provided by the internationalised environment could help students and staff to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences to enable them to function more fully and competently in an increasingly global environment (Bourn et al. 2006;

Caruana and Hanstock 2008; Knight 2004; Mestenhauser 2000; OECD 1999; OECD/CERI 2003).

Within an increasingly competitive global environment, with a concomitant increasing emphasis on the commercial potential of the 'goods' of higher education, some argue that the balance is swinging too far in favour of economic and commercial interests at the expense of the primary academic, intellectual, social and cultural functions of universities (Knight 2004; Naidoo 2003; Naidoo and Jamieson 2005). There are concerns that the role of education in enriching the individual and society is being eroded by market-driven forces, which are increasingly determining the manner in which education is developed, delivered and assessed (Walker 2006). There is a detectable current of negative criticism within the literature about the rhetoric rather than practices of internationalisation and the true motives behind the desire of institutions to become more internationalised, despite their public mission statements and internationalisation strategies (Altbach and Knight 2007; Ayoubi and Massoud 2007; De Vita and Case 2010; Gu et al. 2010; Ippolito 2007). Critics consider that the outward promotion of activities which enhance global relations might, for some institutions, be more of a marketing exercise than reflecting a genuine concern. It is thought that references to international courses or internationalising the curriculum, for example, do not necessarily imply thoughtful, valuable input to courses, but can be superficial, minimal additions, done with the intention of promoting courses for their international interest or appeal to international markets (De Vita and Case 2003; Mestenhauser 2000).

Although there is a responsibility upon providers of education to fulfil their role in the provision of knowledge and skills, which are important both for individuals and for societies, some have criticised what they see as a human capital approach to education. With an increasing emphasis on generic or transferable skills, outcomes are measured solely as knowledge and skills, at the expense of consideration of values and society (Booth et al. 2009; Hinchliffe 2007; Knight 2004; Naidoo 2003; Naidoo and Jamieson 2005; Walker 2004; Walker 2005; Williams 2005). There is the risk, particularly through the mass provision of virtual education, that there is a movement towards a 'one size fits all' approach, particularly if it is produced at low cost, with little regard given to the pedagogical, intellectual and societal requirements of the programme or its intended audience. There is clearly a tension between the competing aims or desires of a higher education: on the one hand in providing valuable skills for entry to the labour market and on the other, as having intrinsic value and an opportunity to explore and develop one's values and self.

### ***2.5.2 Commercial Gain***

In the free market system, international education has become commodified through trade liberalisation and its status as an internationally tradable service (Grünzweig 2000; Naidoo and Jamieson 2005). The General Agreement on

Trade in Services (GATS), which came into force in 1995, aims to promote trade by reducing barriers to the flow of services, introducing an element of fairness, so enabling the participation of developing countries (Knight 2002; World Trade Organisation 2011). However it has brought about an increasingly commercial orientation to education, acting to increase competition for services and provision between nations. The provision of higher education within some more powerful countries has become an industry for the enhancement of their economy and reputation, with efforts by some countries and multinational corporations to embed the import and export of higher education into global trading structures (Altbach 2004; IAU 2010; Naidoo 2003; Naidoo and Jamieson 2005; Scott 2000).

Novel strategic investments and partnerships have become necessary in order to maintain a competitive market position, causing universities to become increasingly operated as commercial businesses (Naidoo and Jamieson 2005; Scott 2000). The higher the economic return on international students (and the higher the number of students) the less a national government might have to invest in its country's higher education system (Knight and De Wit 1995), with the economy of the host country being boosted not only through payment of fees, but also through the spending of money by students within the host country (Altbach and Knight 2007; Knight 2008). Additionally, the establishment of a bond between international graduates and their country of study provides potential for subsequent benefits through, for example, donations, recommendation or partnerships.

There is a strong financial incentive for institutions to recruit international students, with their payment of full fees, in order to augment income (Altbach and Knight 2007; SHRE and CIHE 2007). Net injection into UK economy from international (including EU) students is about £8bn *per annum* (Universities UK 2012). International student fees account for about 10% of total income into institutions in UK and provide essential funding for maintaining the financial viability of a significant number of institutions, with some departments and courses, particularly in the UK, unviable without international students (Bruch and Barty 1998; Knight and De Wit 1995; Montgomery 2010).

Concern has been expressed about the recruitment of international students primarily as a means of financial support, without giving due regard to matters of their support, welfare and teaching quality, not balanced by partnership activities nor consideration of the wider moral and cultural values of education (Altbach and Knight 2007; De Vita and Case 2010; Gu et al. 2010; Ippolito 2007). The net flow of revenue is also predominantly from the poorest to the richest countries and criticism has been levelled that commercialisation acts as a barrier to building better systems of higher education in developing countries, as powerful institutions build their reputation at the expense of collaboration with them (Naidoo 2007).

As the proportion of public spending on higher education is tending to diminish globally, particularly following the recent global economic crisis and global market downturns, governments are looking to new models to boost funding from private sources (Knight 2008; OECD 2012). This includes private investors in education; private providers of education (now accounting for about 30% world-wide (Altbach 2009)) and shifting costs to students and institutions.

The higher education arena has become dominated by rankings and prestige, with a good reputation being essential for an institution's viability and position within a competitive international market (Knight 2004). Institutional policies and practices are developed in order to maintain and better their position through, for example, provision of high quality education, development of research partnerships, enhanced breadth of research and formation of strategic alliances (Altbach and Knight 2007; DEA 2005; SHRE and CIHE 2007). Retention of international students within the host country post-education boosts the knowledge capital within that country, although this so-called 'brain-drain'<sup>7</sup> can negatively impact upon capacity-building in the sending country (IAU 2010; IAU 2012; Knight 2008; OECD 2008a; UNESCO 2010). The concern, particularly for low income countries, is that their investment in education and training is lost to the benefit of other nations. Yet neither the development of their knowledge and skills, nor their subsequent employment could have been achieved at home - important not only for the individuals but also for the potential increase to the global pool of knowledge and innovation. Additionally a high salary from a family member working abroad might be an important contribution to economic, hence social, welfare. In an attempt to reduce 'brain drain', countries are developing strategies to encourage students to return home or to retain links with their home country. Evidence suggests that 'brain circulation' occurs through individuals keeping in contact with their home country – for example maintaining links with institutions or businesses, acting as visiting scholars, affecting change in institutions in their own country or returning after a period abroad (Altbach 2004; OECD 2008b; OECD 2009b).

## **2.6 The Internationalisation of Higher Education: Summary**

Within current conditions of globalisation, which are tending to increase tensions between economic and socio-cultural values in education, I suggest that it is essential to retain the public good function of higher education in supporting the aims and values of universities which, through providing a vehicle for a transformative educational experience, are to promote knowledge and understanding (including of peoples and others), in pursuit of a fulfilled personal life and creation of just societies. This requires the focus not to be upon activities which provide a relatively short-term financial gain but upon

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7 'Brain drain' is the loss of skills and talent from a less to a more developed country. When students have left their home country for study they do not necessarily return, but stay abroad for career and study opportunities and for enhanced working and living conditions.



those which have the potential to create the longer-term benefits of advancing knowledge and human development within the global society. There are huge financial and economic interests at stake in the international higher education market and, in an open market created through the impact of GATS, governments have been pushed to capitalise on the potentially lucrative business of higher education. Yet collateral benefits have arisen through having to adapt and develop in order to cope with changing demands of a global economy and also stay ahead of the game. The result has been the development of novel means of delivery of education, of potential mutual benefit to a large number of people - to citizens of the countries which are providing the education and to individuals from other countries to whom the education is being provided, either as international students or as recipients of education within their own countries. Not only have the opportunities for education quantitatively increased, the range of opportunities has also expanded, offering more choice as to the type of study, enabling the potential for higher education for more students.

The free market, however, may act to further widen the inequalities within education. It provides the opportunity for the wealthiest to further corner their share of the market, leaving the poorest and weakest to struggle, unable to compete within the global education arena and remaining dependent upon foreign providers for education - with the inherent risk of it being mainly profit-driven, inappropriate for local needs or of poor quality. A veneer of altruism appears to run through much of the rhetoric about student experience and global partnerships but, for many players in this field, the primary driver may be profit. The question remains as to whether the needs of the market are compatible with the vision of the university primarily as a place for the creation and dissemination of knowledge and development of personal and social values. A responsibility lies with governments and institutions to be mindful of their duty to recognise and deliver the public good which comes from education.

## **2.7 The Student in Internationalised Higher Education**

In this next section I present a discussion based on review of the literature on internationalisation from the student perspective. The literature from which this section is drawn is based largely upon fairly small-scale studies but which, when taken together, show the lived reality for a significant number of students in higher education.

The discourse around the internationalisation of higher education is recently shifting in focus: it is becoming more student-centred, rather than primarily focussed on process; international students are becoming portrayed less in terms of a deficit model (recognising that they might be disorientated or disempowered in culturally unfamiliar surroundings, rather than intrinsically 'deficient') and there is greater recognition that neither international nor domestic students exist within homogeneous groups, but are individuals, each with their own different cultures and values. The culture or identity of a

student cannot be narrowly defined or described in terms of coming from a single environment or background.

Within the literature which examines education from a cultural perspective the meaning or understanding of the term culture is rarely defined. It is much more of an assumed term, which usually represents a national or perhaps ethnic basis or upbringing (Bochner et al. 1977; Gill 2007; Halualani 2008; Halualani et al. 2004; Hofstede and Hofstede 2005; Jones 1999; Katulushi 2005; Lasonen 2005; Li and Gasser 2005; Robinson and Katulushi 2005; Searle and Ward 1990; Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern 2002; Volet 1999; Volet and Renshaw 1995; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward 2001) and which often views culture as fixed, deeply rooted within individuals and a major factor in determining their identities, norms and behaviour (Marginson 2009). Yet within these broad cultures are numerous smaller and overlapping sub-cultures – not static, but dynamic and constantly in flux. They are made up of a plurality of traditions and perpetually shifted by external influences (Alexander and Thompson 2008; Appiah 2006; Bhabha 1994; Clifford 1998; Hall 2002; Marginson 2009; Nussbaum 1997; Papastephanou 2002; Rizvi 2009; Scheffler 1999) and themselves changed by the interactions of the individuals who move amongst those cultures. Through the effects of globalisation especially, cultures are tending to become more fluid and less definable as separate entities, as opportunities, modes and frequency of global interactions increase. The literature based on studies amongst international students usually expresses culture in terms of nationality and some is also influenced by the work of Hofstede (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005) who interpreted culture as being primarily defined along national lines. This work was based on (Western-developed) surveys of middle managers in a global corporation, took little account of individual differences and could be seen as promoting inappropriate stereotypical categorisation on the basis of nationality (McSweeney 2002; Signorini et al. 2009), yet it is upon this that a significant number of papers draw.

Although there is a more recent shift towards capturing perspectives of home as well as international students, most research on the student experience of international education focuses on the experiences of international students, with relatively little consideration of the home student perspective. It also tends to focus on the experiences of a particular group, with no mutual discussion or exploration of each other's views. Although international students do have concerns and experiences not shared by the whole student population, the emphasis on considering only international students' perspectives and experiences risks the creation of a one-sided story which fails to identify or acknowledge the issues common to all students in adjusting to university and learning and living with others who are different from themselves. My study therefore aims to provide a fuller picture by capturing the experiences of home and international students.

I begin by discussing students' motivations and expectations of international study, before discussing what research shows is the reality of experience for many students.

Despite the relative lack of literature on home students in internationalised higher education I have tried to present a picture which encompasses all students, both home and international, as far as possible. The research literature shows a two-sided picture: of the benefits and enjoyment to be gained from an internationalised higher education versus, for international students in particular, a mis-match between their expectations and the reality of their experiences of university.

## **2.8 Studying as an International Student: Reasons for and Expectations of an International Education**

Here I present an overview of choices and expectations about higher education from the perspective of international students. An international education is valued because of the whole experience it affords: it provides the chance to widen one's horizons through experiencing other cultures, people and life outside one's own country (Bourke 1997; Chalmers and Volet 1997; Gill 2007; Grey 2002; Koehne 2006; Pyvis and Chapman 2007; Sadlak 1998; Sin 2009; Ward 2001). It is apparent that the majority of international students choose an international education for reasons which are not solely academic.

Study abroad can promote personal, social and language development, enhancing status and widening social mobility opportunities within students' own country (Bourke 1997; Sin 2009). It promotes independence and self-confidence in the social and in the learning environment, particularly when students are encouraged to work independently or to seek and express independent views (Bourke 1997; Gill 2007; Sadlak 1998; Sin 2009). Studying in a different country provides the opportunity to improve or acquire competence in a foreign language (Bourke 1997; Caruana and Spurling 2007; Sadlak 1998). Specifically, exposure to the English language is often desired, being the primary language of business and the professions and, particularly, of science, research and publication (Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Marginson and van der Wende 2007; Saenger 2007).

An international education provides the chance to experience other cultures and life outside one's own country (Gill 2007; Koehne 2006; Sadlak 1998; Sin 2009). Many students desire and expect to experience a new environment and meet new people, in particular from different societies and cultures (Bourke 1997; Caruana and Spurling 2007; Chalmers and Volet 1997; Grey 2002; Koehne 2006; Mazzarol and Soutar 2002; Sadlak 1998; UKCOSA 2004; Ward 2001). It appears that students do not expect a passive experience, but rather expect to widen their horizons through exchange (of ideas, learning, cultures, experiences), in living and learning alongside individuals from other cultures (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Koehne 2006; Pyvis and Chapman 2007). Students often explicitly say they want to interact with students from the host culture

(Brown 2009; Montgomery 2010; Smart et al. 2000; Sovič 2009; UKCOSA 2004; Ward 2001).

International education might be undertaken in order to gain a competitive edge in employment (Caruana and Spurling 2007; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Pyvis and Chapman 2007; Sadlak 1998). As well as providing opportunities described above, study abroad can provide practical advantage through, for example, gaining internationally recognised or professional qualifications not available in the home country or opportunities to develop technical skills abroad (Bourke 1997; Bruch and Barty 1998; Caruana and Spurling 2007; Mazzarol and Soutar 2002). Graduates with Western qualifications or working experience are afforded higher status or are particularly valued by employers in some countries (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002; Sin 2009).

Having set out students expectations about higher education I turn now to look at the extent to which they are borne out in reality.

## **2.9 Reality versus Expectations: Student Experiences of Higher Education**

In this section I discuss students' experiences of the social and learning environments. The research literature on student experiences of higher education tends to consider 'minority' groups, for example mature students, international students, students with disabilities or students from working class backgrounds. However it is evident that there are pleasures and pain of living and being a student in higher education which are common to all and that together, these 'minority' groups actually make up the 'majority'. However as the focus of my work is on intercultural (particularly international) relationships, I will provide only a brief overview of student experiences of higher education more generally, before considering in greater depth some of the issues specific to experiences and interactions between international and home students. Whilst some of the experiences and difficulties highlighted in this section - for example crossing friendship groups or negotiating group work - apply to all students, between and within cultural groups, some of the problems are exacerbated by stereotyping and assumptions and are automatically attributed to or blamed upon cultural and national differences.

### ***2.9.1 Experiences of the Higher Education Environment***

Friendship and social support emerges as one of the most important factors for students' adjustment to their new university surroundings. University students are from widely differing and overlapping social, cultural, national and religious backgrounds, (dis)abilities and personal circumstances, and tend to migrate towards those with whom they identify and feel most comfortable. A feeling of 'fitting in' is important, whether socially, academically or linguistically, and friendships are often based on similarity, for example of interests, values or hobbies. Friendships also arise spontaneously through proximity of working and interactions in the classroom and pedagogy which encourages collaborative, interactive learning can positively influence social

integration within the academic environment (Braxton et al. 2000; Briggs et al. 2012; Buote et al. 2007; Christie et al. 2008; Watson et al. 2009; Wilcox et al. 2005). Social contacts provide support, a sense of belonging, and help to overcome initial feelings of anxiety, loneliness and homesickness and, conversely, those students who feel unable to fit in are more likely to experience feelings of isolation and frustration (Briggs et al. 2012; Buote et al. 2007; Mann 2008; Wilcox et al. 2005). Whilst for some students the experience of higher education is one which is stimulating and enjoyable, through which they flourish, others can find the move to higher education bewildering and dislocating as they cope with adjusting to new frames of academic, as well as social reference; feeling lost in large, impersonal classes; experiencing less interaction and personal contact with tutors; struggling to adapt to more independent learning; feeling incompetent against peers; balancing work and social or domestic lives and trying to understand the 'rules' of university study (Briggs et al. 2012; Christie et al. 2008; Jackson 2003; Mann 2008; Wilcox et al. 2005). Students can experience both academic and social 'culture shock' as they are thrown into unfamiliar environments and must negotiate new senses of self as they explore and align their identities pre- and within university (Jackson 2003; Watson et al. 2009; Wilcox et al. 2005).

So having to negotiate and adapt to a new university environment and find a sense of belonging are experiences common to all students. Turning now to internationalised education specifically, I discuss the positive and negative aspects of international education and intercultural experiences portrayed by students. Whilst considering firstly their social environments and secondly their learning environments, I recognise that there is inevitably some overlap.

### ***2.9.2 Intercultural Experiences of the Social Environment***

Higher education, particularly in an internationalised environment, enables students to explore and develop themselves as they are exposed to different cultures, experiences and languages. It can be a transformative experience which helps them become more independent, broaden their thinking and which allows them to (re)evaluate and (re)construct their identities (Gill 2007; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Stier 2003; Tran 2013). A majority of students in higher education report that they view cultural diversity and intercultural contact as important and value the experience of mixing with students of different nationality (Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Halualani et al. 2004; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Montgomery 2009; Summers and Volet 2008), although this is more prevalent amongst international than home students (UNITE/UKCOSA 2006). Interacting with others can help students learn about differences and similarities between people and cultures, thereby becoming more aware of their own relative social and cultural position (Brooks 2007; Campbell 2012; Erichsen 2011; Gu et al. 2010; Hyland et al. 2008). It also enables students to be more relaxed and confident about approaching those from other cultures; helps to reduce the tendency to stereotype; encourages further intercultural engagement; improves language proficiency and intercultural communication skills and can be the basis of

lasting and valued intercultural friendships (Campbell 2012; Hyland et al. 2008; Robinson 2006; Volet and Ang 1998).

Conversely, the literature shows that, despite students saying they value the diversity of an internationalised university environment, the juxtaposition of students from different countries and cultures does not necessarily promote interaction and understanding (Halualani et al. 2004; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998). In studies of students' experiences of internationalised higher education, relationships with others is not only one of the most important and discussed aspects of students' lives (Brown 2009; Hyland et al. 2008), but also frequently provokes negative comments regarding the lack of mixing between students from different cultural groups. The following discussion is about how the reality for many students, often in contrast to their expectations, is primarily of segregation into cultural and national groups.

Although students' cultures and backgrounds differ within and between groups, there may be some stark differences amongst the international student population, especially as compared with home students. International students from different countries tend to experience similar barriers and difficulties (Brown 2009; Clifford 2010; Koehne 2005). For example, they might feel themselves positioned as 'other', causing them to feel 'different' or that they stand out from other students; they might also feel ignored and 'invisible' (Hyland et al. 2008; Mann 2008; Marginson 2013). International and home students tend therefore to group separately, either through positive choice or reluctantly, for reasons which include feeling (un)comfortable or (dis)connected, language, lack of shared interests, or apparent disinterest or hostility from others (Brown 2009; Campbell and Li 2008; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Montgomery 2010; Pyvis and Chapman 2007; Schweisfurth and Gu 2009; UKCOSA 2004). A tendency to different lifestyles and values means that students might find it difficult to develop true intercultural friendships with each other (Coles and Swami 2012; Education New Zealand 2005; Gill 2007; Hyland et al. 2008; Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006). Notably, the prevalence of the drinking of alcohol occurs repeatedly as a barrier to friendships and social integration (Bartram 2007; Bruch and Barty 1998; Harrison and Peacock 2007; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Peacock and Harrison 2009; Severiens et al. 2006; UKCOSA 2004).

There is a strong tendency towards co-national groupings (Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Gill 2007; Humfrey et al. 2001; O'Donoghue 1996; UKCOSA 2004), particularly in students' social environments, as they feel more comfortable with those of similar cultural and language backgrounds (Bochner et al. 2001; Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Hyland et al. 2008; Leung and Lee 2006; Volet and Ang 1998). Co-national and close cultural or religious groups are well-defined and supportive entities, which support new students, pass on experience and knowledge, so reinforcing the group bonding (Harrison and Peacock 2007; Humfrey et al. 2001; Montgomery and McDowell 2009; O'Donoghue 1996; Schweisfurth and Gu 2009), but simultaneously inhibiting integration (Coles and Swami 2012; Halualani et al. 2004). Belonging to national societies can be

a source of comfort and support, opportunity for mutual celebration of national or religious events and practical information, but tends to further insulate students from those of different nationalities, languages and cultures (Humfrey et al. 2001; Sovič 2009; UKCOSA 2004). Some, particularly international students, actively try to avoid friendships with co-nationals, although this is not always an easy option due to the risk of alienating one's co-national friends and because of socially different preferences. However such students can act as a bridge between different groups of home and co-national students, as can home ethnic minority students who join national societies (UKCOSA 2004).

Yet some international students find themselves feeling lonely, with few close friends, finding it hard to communicate and to adjust to social and pedagogical systems and norms (Grey 2002; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Sovič 2009; Welikala and Watkins 2008). There is evidence that engagement with the host culture can aid sociocultural adjustment to the new environment (Furnham and Alibhai 1985; Li and Gasser 2005; Searle and Ward 1990; Ward and Kennedy 1994) but in addition to the inhibitory factors described above, students report finding it difficult to befriend those from the host culture because of their disinterest and standoffishness (Brown 2009; Marginson 2013; Sovič 2009). However, friendships tend to be formed on the basis of shared interests or activities, for example sport, drama or music, and students who participate in such university activities are more likely to have intercultural friendships (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Montgomery 2010; UKCOSA 2004). These shared interests represent another shared 'culture'.

Language and communication play a significant role in moulding students' experiences of life at university. There is a greater likelihood of interactions and friendship formation between home and international students with greater (English) language fluency; conversely, poor language fluency acts as a barrier (Peacock and Harrison 2009; Swami et al. 2010; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998). Some international students feel a dilemma between their desire and need to practise speaking English and the human need to be with co-language speakers in order to relax, particularly after a day's study, communicating in a different language (Brown 2009a; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Saenger 2007). Also, despite proficiency in the host language, different backgrounds and upbringing makes understanding the context or culture of conversations more difficult, and gestures and humour are also culture-specific (Hyland et al. 2008; Montgomery 2010; Tan and Lowe 2009). Language represents a facet of student's identity. Their sense of self is therefore affected by the way they feel able to express themselves, not just linguistically, but as a person (Gill 2007; Holliday 2010; Mann 2008). There might be a sense of wanting, but being unable, to be 'my true self' (Kettle and Luke 2013; Mann 2008).

Unlike international students, who cannot escape from their intercultural experience (variable though that may be), local students may be relatively unaware of their international environment. For them it may be a transient

exposure, from which they return to their relatively culturally homogeneous environment (Sen Gupta 2003). Home students might fail to recognise students from different countries as individuals rather than as one of a group of 'international students' (Hyland et al. 2008; Sovič 2009); they might avoid interactions; find it hard to make the effort particularly when communication is difficult (Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Hyland et al. 2008; Otten 2003; Peacock and Harrison 2009) and do not tend to feel any responsibility to act as hosts or provide support (Education New Zealand 2005; Hyland et al. 2008). There is evidence that older students and those from ethno-linguistic minority backgrounds are more likely to be friendly, patient and sympathetic with international students and that over time, students generally do become more comfortable and able to interact with those from different countries and cultures (Education New Zealand 2005; Ippolito 2007; Sovič 2009; UKCOSA 2004).

It is apparent that the predominant picture is one of segregation and that without effort or a shared interest, a majority of students do not mix socially to a great extent across cultures. Whilst some students, from both home and international groups, view the relative lack of mixing, especially between home and international students, as 'just the way it is' (Brown 2009a; Hyland et al. 2008), it is in contrast to the expectations of many international students and can cause frustration and disappointment (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Grey 2002; Mullins et al. 1995; O'Donoghue 1996; Smart et al. 2000; Sovič 2009; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward 2001). Yet despite most of the literature on cross-cultural friendships pointing to the disadvantaged situation of international students because of their relative lack of interaction with home students (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Grey 2002; Mullins et al. 1995; O'Donoghue 1996; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward 2001), many international students benefit through their interactions and friendships with students from other countries, gaining a broader intercultural experience than many home students (Knight 2011a; Montgomery and McDowell 2009). Although many international students expect to mix with home students specifically, I would propose that a goal of internationalisation must involve providing a broad intercultural experience for all students, irrespective of nationality or culture.

I turn now to look at the academic environment. Many of the intrinsic problems discussed above with respect to their social environments impact upon interactions within the classroom.

### ***2.9.3 Intercultural Experiences of the Academic Environment***

As described above, having to adjust to the university learning environment is common to all students. For all students the experience can be stimulating and enriching, helping them become more confident and independent through learning (Christie et al. 2008; Mann 2008). The literature suggests that for many international students, studying in a different country, including overcoming initial difficulties within a new pedagogical environment, can



result in them feeling empowered, excited and confident in themselves, becoming more active, independent, critical learners, with more confidence to present in front of others (Gill 2007; Grey 2002; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Kingston and Forland 2008; Ramsay et al. 2007; Tran 2013).

In contrast to these positive findings, experiences of the learning environment can be problematic. Concerns which are relevant to all students include independence in learning, understanding academic requirements, time management, quality of feedback and decisions to seek study support (Christie et al. 2008; Hyland et al. 2008; Jackson 2003; Mann 2008; Wilcox et al. 2005). However there are issues which are specific to international students or to interactions between home and international students. Some courses comprise mainly international students, who therefore rarely meet home students (Hyland et al. 2008). Even for courses which are more mixed in terms of nationality, many home and international students show little tendency to mix outside their own cultural or ethnic groups, remaining segregated in lectures and group work which, in itself, lessens the likelihood of spontaneous interaction and mutual learning (De Vita 2002; Dunne 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Hills and Thom 2005; Hyland et al. 2008; Volet and Ang 1998). When students are required to work together, tensions, misunderstandings and communication problems are evident, as I shall discuss in more detail below.

Problems can arise because of the range of prior experiences of pedagogy within an international classroom (Bodycott and Walker 2000; Chalmers and Volet 1997; Cortazzi and Jin 1997; Gill 2007; Grey 2002; Jones 1999; Kember 2000; Luzio-Lockett 1998; O'Donoghue 1996; Ramburuth and McCormick 2001; Volet 1999; Volet and Renshaw 1995; Welikala and Watkins 2008; Zhang et al. 1999). While all students have to adjust to the university learning environment, international students often have to cope also with language challenges, adapting to the host student culture and the pedagogical environment and norms (Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Hyland et al. 2008; Kember 2000; O'Donoghue 1996; Ramburuth 2001; UNITE/UKCOSA 2006; Volet and Renshaw 1995). Most students do adjust to the different pedagogical environment and expectations, but it can take time (Kember 2000). Some international students perceive a lack of reciprocal learning and adaptation to different pedagogies within institutions, with local students and academics assuming that their (Western) environment represents universal norms. Therefore international students must adapt to the dominant pedagogical approaches (Hyland et al. 2008; Volet 1999; Welikala 2008); examples used in teaching are not necessarily relevant to the context of their home country (Koehne 2006); the 'rules' of the academic culture are often implicit, meaning that it is hard to understand to expectations (Zhang et al. 1999); and behaviour which deviates from the norm can be seen as indicative of deficiency (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Turner 2008; Volet 1999).

Intercultural communication can present a particular problem within the academic environment, especially when students are expected to interact and

work with each other. Despite being highly competent in the English language, it is often difficult for international students, especially initially, to understand different forms of English and accents, particularly at speed (Henderson 2009; Sovič 2007; Welikala and Watkins 2008; Zhang et al. 1999). Phrases, expressions, attitudes and behaviours are socially and culturally specific, and the ‘cultural scripts’<sup>8</sup> (Mann 2008; Welikala and Watkins 2008) that all students bring with them determine how they behave and make sense of each other’s communication and behaviours. Hesitant contribution or use of English, or use of silence by some international students might cause others to assume they are less intelligent, disinterested or unwilling to share ideas, thereby making group work less efficient and harder work (Barron 2006; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Hellstén and Prescott 2004; Henderson 2009; Ippolito 2007; Leki 2001; Luzio-Lockett 1998; Osmond and Roed 2010; Trahar 2007). International students might be unfamiliar with the process of group discussions or with the different norms of turn-taking in conversation (Osmond and Roed 2010; Welikala and Watkins 2008), such that some native English speakers can come across as brash, arrogant or overbearing, constantly interrupting and having little time or inclination for two-way conversation (Clifford 2010; Turner 2008; Welikala and Watkins 2008). These negative assumptions can further inhibit interaction and the recognition of each other’s skills and potential contribution (Harrison and Peacock 2010a). Students often find it easier to discuss views with those who share similar cultural or language backgrounds, not only because of language and context, but also because of the effort needed and anxiety about misunderstandings or causing offence (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Ippolito 2007; Osmond and Roed 2010; Smart et al. 2000; Volet and Ang 1998). Some international students desire to speak out, but also fear doing so (Clifford 2010; Osmond and Roed 2010; Tan and Lowe 2009; Zhang et al. 1999), possibly feeling lonely, frustrated or stupid amongst groups of native English speakers (Hyland et al. 2008; Mann 2008; Mullins et al. 1995). This can be exacerbated when they feel that their responses (and sometimes they) are ignored, rejected or not respected by their local peers (Harrison and Peacock 2007; Mann 2008; Mullins et al. 1995; Osmond and Roed 2010; Ryan and Viète 2009). Having to ask questions, either about the language or more generally about the culture, can make international students feel incompetent and frustrated (Ippolito 2007; Leki 2001; Osmond and Roed 2010; Sherry et al. 2010). These factors can combine to diminish students’ sense of self-worth and dignity, so impinging upon their sense of identity. Depending upon the personal characteristics of the student, they might react either by withdrawing further or conversely, make additional effort in order to re-assert their self and identity (Mann 2008; Tan and Lowe 2009; Tananuraksakul 2012).

One area of pedagogy which appears to have a powerful and beneficial effect on intercultural experiences is group work. Diverse group work provides the opportunity for mixing as students break out of their comfort zone and interact

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Cultural scripts’ are used in this context to represent ways of speaking and interpretations of others communication and behaviours. Meanings and action are determined from experience and, as such, scripts might be culturally shared.

with others. It can be an important route to making intercultural friendships and acquiring understanding about different students and their cultures (Campbell and Li 2008; De Vita 2000; De Vita 2005a; Education New Zealand 2005; Henderson 2009; Hyland et al. 2008; Ippolito 2007; Kelly 2008; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Montgomery and McDowell 2009; Osmond and Roed 2010; Severiens et al. 2006; Sweeney et al. 2008; Volet and Ang 1998). Similarly in my study, group work emerged as a significant factor in the intercultural experiences of students and forms the subject of Chapter 7.

Although group work has the potential to create possibilities for effective intercultural relationships, it can cause the opposite effect when relationships do not work well. Conflict, dissatisfaction and resentment can arise amongst all students due to differing perceived levels of commitment, goals and deadlines, methods of working or distribution of work, which are attributed to cultural differences (Clark et al. 2007; Ippolito 2007; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Osmond and Roed 2010; Sweeney et al. 2008; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998). Home students are often perceived by some international students as unwelcoming and unwilling to interact with them in groups, leading to feelings of exclusion (Barron 2006; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Ryan and Viete 2009; Summers and Volet 2008; Tananuraksakul 2012; Trahar 2007; Turner 2008; UKCOSA 2004; UNITE/UKCOSA 2006; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward et al. 2005; Wright and Lander 2003). Even when students report favourable experiences, they rarely seek to interact further with students from different cultures (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Koehne 2005; Summers and Volet 2008; Volet and Ang 1998).

This section has highlighted the difficulties experienced by students in the internationalised environment, in terms of the (lack of) extent and quality of interactions with culturally-different others. It has shown that potential does exist for learning with and about others, but that it is frequently hampered by barriers caused through difference.

## **2.10 The Student in Internationalised Higher Education: Summary**

The body of literature dealing with students in higher education suggests that common experiences and needs are encountered. To greater or lesser extents students are stimulated and inspired through their learning; enjoy new friendships and activities; and discover new identities through their experiences. They might also be fearful or anxious about aspects of their social or academic lives; experience doubts; and long for company and comfort. Some of these facets of students' lives are exaggerated when studying in an international environment, in which students are more likely to feel disorientated, disempowered and in need of social and academic support as they navigate through their new and often very different surroundings.

The literature on students in internationalised higher education describes their varied experiences. It illustrates the benefits that can be gained by both home and international students in being able to experience and learn something of

each other's cultures through working and living together. For international students especially, being at university in an environment which is foreign to them can be a transformative experience as they are exposed to markedly different national, social and cultural norms. It is apparent that the reality of university does not in many cases mirror students' expectations of higher education, nor the ideals of internationalisation to provide an environment which promotes intercultural relationships, learning and understanding. Although a majority of international students experience intercultural friendships, there remains a general lack of interaction between home and international students. This deprives home students of opportunities for development of a more intercultural outlook and continues to be a source of disappointment and frustration for many international students.

Having considered the arena of internationalised education on a global scale I now narrow my focus to describe the pharmacy profession and training of pharmacists in the context of an internationalised university and degree course, which is the site of my study.

## **2.11 The Context of Pharmacy Education**

Pharmacists in the UK have wide ranging roles based on their expertise in drugs and therapeutics. In this section I will provide an overview of the pharmacy profession, before describing the education of pharmacy students and providing some detail on the School of Pharmacy in which my study was based.

### ***2.11.1 The Pharmacy Profession***

The profession of pharmacy within the UK is regulated by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). There are approximately 50,000 registered pharmacists. From having been a profession which was largely concerned with the formulation, quality and supply of medicines it has, particularly over the past 20 years, widened significantly in response to political and public demands, changing economic models, deregulation of medicines and increased interprofessional working. Pharmacists are now involved to a much greater extent in advising patients, the public and other healthcare professionals about medicines and drug therapy, working with a greater, more therapeutically effective range of medicines.

Until September 2010, pharmacists were registered with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB), whose functions were both professional and regulatory. However, in order to follow best practice and be aligned to other healthcare professions, the body was split to separate the representative and regulatory functions. This led to the formation of the GPhC as the regulatory body for pharmacists (and now also pharmacy technicians), responsible for ensuring standards of education and training; standards for pharmacy premises and provision of medicines and services and fitness to

practise. The professional body, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society is responsible for leadership and support.

The GPhC sets standards for pharmacists that emphasise the need to be considerate of cultural and religious differences which might impact upon people's health and use of pharmacy services (General Pharmaceutical Council 2013). For example, the standards require pharmacists to respect diversity and the right to hold personal values and beliefs; to be sensitive to different personal boundaries; to ensure clarity of information despite language barriers and to ensure equality of health services, irrespective of pharmacists' moral or religious beliefs about the use of some medicines.

Approximately 70% of the membership practises in community pharmacy, where its roles include clinically verifying and supplying medicines on prescription and over the counter; responding to patients' symptoms and providing advice or medicines as appropriate; and providing health promotion services to patients, such as smoking cessation, blood pressure measurement and cholesterol management. The second largest sector of practice, for about 20% of pharmacists, is in hospitals. Their roles include managing and optimising patients' drug therapy; ensuring medicines supply to wards and outpatients; production of specialised dosage forms and provision of medicines information. The remainder of pharmacists hold roles in areas such as the pharmaceutical industry, NHS primary care organisations, academia, prisons or training.

### ***2.11.2 Pharmacy Education***

In order to register with the GPhC, applicants must normally hold an MPharm degree from an accredited UK university, have successfully completed a 52-week period of pre-registration training and passed the GPhC registration examination. Some reciprocity exists for recognition of pharmacists from other EU countries, following a programme of training and assessment within the UK. Pharmacists are required to undergo an annual registration process, including a declaration of fitness to practise and maintenance of evidence of continuing professional development.

There are 25 Schools of Pharmacy in the UK. The four-year MPharm degree is re-accredited every five years by the GPhC, based on an outcomes framework. Having passed the undergraduate degree, pharmacy graduates must undergo a further period of supervised practical pre-registration training, usually within community or hospital pharmacy, in order to become eligible to register as a pharmacist. Successful completion of this training requires quarterly declarations of competence by the pre-registration tutor and passing the final GPhC registration exam.

In response to recent government White Papers, the changing climate of healthcare provision and sustained lobbying from pharmacy organisations and Schools of Pharmacy, it is anticipated that the MPharm degree and pre-

registration training will soon become amalgamated to create a five-year course with more practical and applied training throughout.

### ***2.11.3 The MPharm at the Research Site***

The MPharm at my site of study is an established course, ranked highly within UK Schools of Pharmacy for both teaching and research. The university has a high profile for its internationalisation activities and its School of Pharmacy is one of a number within UK universities which have developed so-called 2+2 MPharm degree courses with university campuses in Malaysia. Students on such courses spend the first two years of their degree at a university in Malaysia, studying equivalent modules to those taught in the first two years of the course in the 'home' School of Pharmacy in the UK. They then spend the final two years of the course at the home campus, where they join the students who are taking the MPharm wholly at the UK institution. These courses are taught either at a branch campus or through an arrangement with a different higher education institution in Malaysia. In 2005 this School launched a 2+2 course with a campus in Malaysia, with the first cohort of the Malaysia Campus students arriving in the UK in 2007. Accreditation by the Malaysian Pharmacy Board as well as the GPhC allows 2+2 students to register to practise as pharmacists in the UK and additionally allows Malaysian students to register in Malaysia.

First year intake onto the MPharm at the UK campus is typically 160 students, of which approximately 25% are international students. This School has a proportionately high number of international students amongst UK Schools of Pharmacy and a markedly high proportion of British ethnic minority students relative to other Schools within the University. Intake at the Malaysia Campus in 2005 and 2006 was 40 and 45 respectively, including a small number of international students. These were the cohorts of students in my study. The 2005 cohort was a relatively small, close-knit group of students. They were in a sense 'pioneers' as they embarked upon a degree which had not yet received full accreditation and, because of the newness of the infrastructure of both the School and course in Malaysia, they had considerable involvement in the early developments and established close relationships with School staff. The second cohort of 45 students was less intimately involved with each other as a whole and with the mechanics of the course. Allowing for losses during the first two years of the course, students enter a third year of about 180 individuals.

The 2+2 course additionally provides the opportunity for UK-based students to spend a semester or the whole of their second year studying at the Malaysia Campus. These students are known as 'mobility students'. There were three mobility students in the first cohort and nine in the second.

## 2.12 Conclusion

The changing global context has forced higher education institutions to reconsider their functions, practices and responsibilities. Although it has created innovative strategies for delivery of education and development of alliances and processes, the measure of success of institutions has become financially driven, with GATS pushing higher education further in the direction of a globally-tradable commodity. The literature points to the fact that, although the internationalisation of higher education creates opportunity and potential for fostering intercultural reality and learning, there is a gap between the rhetoric and ideals of internationalisation and the lived realities for both home and international students.

Education should not be an experience which is confined and restrictive, but which promotes development of students' selves through their engagement with wider experiences and I consider it imperative that a balance be struck between the university as a public good versus higher education as a lucrative service, traded internationally in order to enhance national status.

Mindful of the need to redress the balance between the realisation of higher education's economic benefit and its social and educational value, in the next chapter I will explore the more profound question of what higher education should or could be about. I will argue that, despite the potential adverse effects in eroding the higher values of education, internationalisation has enabled the potential for the experiencing, recognition and exploration of each other's cultures and the cultivation of cosmopolitan values.

It is evident that a re-thinking of the purpose and values of internationalised higher education is required, in order to create an environment in which students are allowed and encouraged to engage with those who are nationally and culturally different in an exploration of a more cosmopolitan and interculturally capable self. The next chapter therefore describes the values of cosmopolitanism and the way in which they could be operationalized within higher education through the application of a capability framework; to open up an educational space in which students can be prompted to examine their selves and values through becoming more aware of their connections to their fellows.

## Chapter 3

### Capabilities as an Expression of Cosmopolitan Principles

#### 3.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, globalisation has forced universities to re-think their business and purposes. With internationalised higher education becoming increasingly financially-driven, it is essential that the personal and societal values upon which higher education should be based are retained. Given the potential provided by the internationalised university environment, I argue here that the values of cosmopolitanism might provide a way of framing some specific desirable outcomes of higher education in contemporary society, and propose a novel way of conceptualising how education might fulfil such outcomes.

Cosmopolitanism derives from ‘cosmopolitan’, meaning literally, from Greek, citizen of the world or belonging to all parts of the world<sup>9</sup>. Within the first part of this chapter I will provide an overview of some of the different angles and interpretations of cosmopolitanism before explaining how I define the concept in the context of this study, drawing primarily on the work of Kwame Anthony Appiah (1998, 2005, 2006). Drawing also on the work of Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2002) and others on global citizenship, I shall make the case for promoting the values of citizenship and cosmopolitanism as part of a professional higher education.

I then discuss how becoming more cosmopolitan-aware can be linked to students’ sense of self or identity and how this can be developed through the creation of a higher educational environment which fosters learning with, from and about individuals of different cultures in order to stimulate a broadening of outlook (intercultural learning).

Finally I describe the ‘capability approach<sup>10</sup>’, which is based on promoting justice through recognising the value of individuals and their lives. I propose the capability approach as an innovative way of conceptualising how cosmopolitan values are and can be embedded in intercultural learning. I propose the use of a ‘capability set’ for being intercultural as a framework for encompassing values of cosmopolitanism and thinking about educational spaces which can promote cosmopolitan values amongst students.

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<sup>9</sup> The term ‘cosmopolitan’ stems from ancient Greek philosophy. The early cosmopolitan movement of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC considered recognition of and allegiance to humankind in general to be of utmost importance, including understanding of the ways of the world and its people through being open to others’ cultures, customs and ideas.

<sup>10</sup> In general parlance, and in higher education, a capability is understood as a skill or an aptitude; being capable of doing something (Gaspar and van Staveren 2003). The understanding of capabilities used in this study, as developed by Sen (discussed in detail in this chapter), represents opportunity or freedom.



### 3.2 Understandings of Cosmopolitanism

In this section I analyse what is understood by cosmopolitanism. It can be considered from political, economic, moral and cultural perspectives; however it is upon a moral or ethical understanding of cosmopolitanism that I shall base this work. This understanding of cosmopolitanism is founded upon a recognition and concern for individuals who are different from us and outside our immediate circle, taking no heed of national, cultural or other boundaries. As there are different perspectives and interpretations of cosmopolitanism, I will outline some below, before discussing Appiah's work in more detail.

'Political' or 'economic' perspectives of cosmopolitanism are in essence different descriptions of globalisation. Through a political lens, cosmopolitanism is based on a system of world government or, perhaps, a global civic society which respects the individuality of nations and which seeks to emphasise human rights, duties and equality on a global scale (Brennan 2003; Hansen et al. 2009; Vertovec and Cohen 2002). This definition of cosmopolitanism is represented, for example, by such organisations as the UN, NATO, The World Bank, OECD or the World Trade Organisation. From an economic viewpoint, the increase in global trade can be seen as producing a form of cosmopolitanism (Malcomson 1998). Although these trade structures might be viewed as a means of promoting equity (Hansen et al. 2009), it might be that so-called cosmopolitan or global values are derived from and driven by markets, economies and capitalist desires rather than human principles. These markets are disproportionately dependent upon or challenging to different nations (Clifford 1998), levelling borders primarily for the purposes of commodities, capital and finance (Bauman 1998). The result is a 'consumerist cosmopolitanism' (Calhoun 2002; Calhoun 2003) which serves only to widen the gap between the privileged and the disadvantaged (Bauman 1998).

In contrast to the descriptions above, cosmopolitanism which is culturally-focussed recognises and highlights the plurality of societies, cultures and identities. It provides the means for understanding, translating and communicating across differences and recognises the potential to be influenced by and to learn from a whole gamut of cultures, communities, people and practices and recognises common, shared human goals and purposes. Appiah (1998, 2005, 2006) proposes a justice-centred description of cosmopolitanism based on two fundamental premises: that every individual has obligations to all others; and that we value the lives of other individuals, hence respect difference and take an interest in the factors that bring about such differences.

*We have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of a shared citizenship (2006:xv)*

*We take seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives, which means taking an interest in the practices and beliefs that lend them significance (2006:xv)*

His description of cosmopolitanism is based upon a desire for justice, which transcends boundaries, and is founded on the relations of human beings with each other. Subscribing to this philosophy does not necessitate holding the same values, desires or practices, but rather recognising the person behind these and accepting that we live by different rules. The cosmopolitan is receptive to and takes an interest in others' views and values, seeking to learn and understand from them. Of course, engaging with human differences presents a challenge because we might not agree with others' beliefs or actions – and indeed we should not suspend criticism. This approach to cosmopolitanism grounded in fundamental respect for human rights, dignity and personal autonomy does not allow simply being indifferent to or endorsing all morals and values. However, it is only by seeking and coming to understand the experiences and conditioning that shape peoples' understanding and behaviour that enables one to realise why some of their actions and behaviour might occur.

*When the stranger is no longer imaginary, but real and present, sharing a human social life, you may like or dislike him, you may agree or disagree; but, if it is what you both want, you can make sense of each other in the end. (2006:99)*

Appiah emphasises that taking a cosmopolitanism approach does not seek to erase or homogenise difference, nor does it fail to recognise the value of individual differences, societies, nations or cultural traditions. Rather, it embraces and celebrates difference; in fact it is the exploration of difference that might be seen as making interaction with others particularly rewarding.

In similar vein to Appiah, Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2002) promotes a justice-centred view of cosmopolitanism that considers all human being as fellow citizens, and emphasises the need to learn about others before being able to judge their actions in an informed and reflective way. Her approach depends upon the notion of individuals as 'global citizens' who promote the creation and maintenance of democratic societies. For her the global citizen is one who does not accept beliefs merely because they form part of tradition or habit, but who has the capacity for logical reasoning and questioning of facts, judgements and reasons, based upon a criterion of justice. She argues that a just and democratic society depends upon individuals who can think and reason for themselves and are willing to challenge rather than simply accepting the norm.

Nussbaum recognises that people might not embrace cosmopolitan values and behaviours:

*People from diverse backgrounds sometimes have difficulty recognising one another as fellow citizens in the community of reason. This is so, frequently,*

*because actions and motives require, and do not always receive, a patient effort of interpretation (1997:63)*

She therefore argues that education (at all levels) should be a medium through which the capacity for interpreting and arriving at an understanding of others can be cultivated. This will be explored in more detail later in the chapter.

Both Appiah and Nussbaum stress that being cosmopolitan does not necessitate the giving up of local affiliations; it does not replace the fundamental, traditional and moral responsibilities to one's own family, community or nation. Appiah recognises that one can be rooted and attached to a home or family or community of one's own, yet can still take pleasure from and maintain a concern for those of others. Nussbaum similarly sees cosmopolitanism as straddling the local and the global spheres or as belonging to two communities - that into which we are born and the wider community of humanity. So they both believe that loyalty to human kind is not counter to concern for one's own; one has a duty to show respect for humanity wherever it occurs.

In my reading of cosmopolitanism from the perspectives of Appiah and Nussbaum, its value comes not only through the moral imperative to do the 'right' thing, but also potentially because of the benefit (of satisfaction, pleasure and self-development) for individuals involved. There are both inward and outward-facing rationales for cosmopolitanism, which are interdependent. It is the development of the self that allows the outward connections with justice, understanding and fairness. Or, viewed the other way round, a concern for these values drives the desire to become more cosmopolitan in outlook. As I now discuss, the development of a more cosmopolitan self through higher education might be a means by which to promote wider thinking in students about those who appear different from us. The holding of a cosmopolitan outlook is often termed 'global citizenship'.

### **3.3 Development of a More Cosmopolitan Self through Higher Education**

The role of the university is seen by some as crucial to develop a richness of mutual understanding amongst individuals, and essential for the development of sound global connections, and so they argue for an approach to education which cultivates the values of democracy, citizenship and cosmopolitanism (Bates 2005; Bourn and Morgan 2010; Delanty 2001; Nussbaum 1997). Furthermore, the vocational benefits of education for global citizenship cannot be overlooked. Globalisation has had a massive impact upon the way in which organisations operate and are having to adapt their operations in order to survive and flourish. Within this context there is a view that success in the global marketplace does depend upon an understanding of and ability to work with different cultures (Bruch and Barty 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar 2002; Rizvi 2005a; Sanderson 2008). Assuming therefore that universities have a responsibility to prepare students for life in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, then the responsibility also falls for making courses more internationally relevant and, arguably, more cosmopolitan in approach.

It is not, however, a simple matter of curriculum design. Higher education involves a process of identity (re-)formation, as students are confronted with new knowledge, experiences and understandings (Barnett 2008; Barnett and Coate 2005; McLean 2008). With the notion of university education as identity transformation, true engagement with cosmopolitanism will involve a questioning and reassessment of one's self and, through this, a shaping of one's identity.

I suggest that engagement with the principles of cosmopolitanism through education provides a route by which students can start to explore their identities and values. The aim of this is not to be prescriptive about the direction of students' development, but rather to offer possibilities.

### ***3.3.1 The Construction of the Self***

The purpose of a cosmopolitan education is to help students explore their own identities and backgrounds in relation to those of others in order to engender an attitude of understanding and concern (Bates 2005; Nussbaum 1997; Rizvi 2005a; Rizvi 2009). Such an education aims to create and allow students to explore the 'in between' space (Bhabha 1994) where cultures and identities, and hence societies, are articulated, contested, negotiated and defined. It is through learning about others, their lives, practices and thinking, that students are forced to learn about themselves, to rethink their stances from the situation or viewpoint of others and to become culturally more aware (Bhabha 1994; Nussbaum 1997; Rizvi 2009). It is their ability to draw from others' cultures, practices and systems of meaning that develops their cosmopolitan self. It is at this point therefore, that I introduce the concepts of self and identity, and of culture.

Identity can be defined as the sense of self, the person one is or thinks one to be and also what one is not (Abercrombie et al. 2006; Appiah 2008a; Jary and Jary 2000). Formed as result of social interaction, identity represents a sense of belonging (Abercrombie et al. 2006; Jary and Jary 2000) and an awareness of the groups to which one does not belong. Identities are least to some extent culturally determined. The definition of culture as 'a way of life' (Abercrombie et al. 2006; Alexander and Thompson 2008; Giddens 1998) captures the idea that culture pervades all aspects of human society. Culture, then, describes the learned aspects of individuals' lives which shape their behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, norms and values (Abercrombie et al. 2006; Alexander and Thompson 2008; Bruce and Yearley 2006; Giddens 1998; Scott and Marshall 2005). These aspects may be deeply ingrained and intrinsic to one's being, especially those which come from the social surroundings and influences of one's upbringing or from one's 'heritage' culture. Other aspects of our selves which have developed from subsequent experiences throughout life tend to be less deeply seated.

Culture imparts a sense of identity and contributes to the sense of who we are. Yet a recurrent theme which emerges from the literature is that it is only by being exposed to different cultures that our own culture is thrown into light: what otherwise appear to be natural features of our life might only be called into question when challenged through being with others who have different frameworks of meaning than our own (Alexander and Thompson 2008; Jary and Jary 2000; Marginson 2009; Williams 2005).

Nation, representing part of one's culture, can have a profound effect upon one's own identity, or on how one is viewed by others (Hoffman 1989; Holliday 2010). For some individuals one's nation imparts a profound sense of identity, which is constant and a source of stability, yet it can cause personal conflict due to the resultant expectations or assumptions of those both from within and outside their country. The notion of cultural identity seems to encompass a blurring of culture and identity and is particularly relevant to my study, given the frequency of references in the literature on higher education to cultural identity (Bochner et al. 1977; Rizvi 2005a; Rizvi 2005b; Unterhalter 2008; Zepke and Leach 2007).

Individuals typically belong to a number of different groups and are confronted with a range of different situations; hence identity development is shaped by a range of influences. A person might be considered to have a hybrid identity, formed as a result of different experiences, and adopt a different identity according to their situation (Erichsen 2011; Gill 2007; Luzio-Lockett 1998; Marginson 2009). Possession of multiple elements of a person's identity might be more evident in those who have 'crossed' cultural boundaries, such as being bicultural by birth, in those who have migrated or in intercultural partner relationships (Marginson 2009). Different identities might be displayed in the home as opposed to the host or other country, environment or language (Hoffman 1989).

Association with a particular group, culture or situation can 'project' or 'imply' a dominant identity and, with that, expectations about behaviour, norms, rights or obligations, despite other affiliations (Appiah 1998; Appiah 2005; Cousin 2012). Such perceptions and expectations held by others can influence the way in which one views oneself and can therefore affect choices about one's identity and freedom to develop the self (Appiah 2005).

The next section considers how students' concepts of their own selves and fellow students might be challenged through a higher education which pays attention to learning about and with others as a route to learn about and expand one's own self.

### ***3.3.2 A Learning Environment to Promote Cosmopolitanism***

In this section I draw upon the literature on cosmopolitanism learning, which has informed my thinking, to outline an 'ideal' higher education which pays attention to the individual and public good.

One of the most influential proponents in arguing for an education which encompasses societal values and citizenship is Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2000), who recognises the role of higher education in fostering principles of cosmopolitanism, helping to develop and empower students as critical beings, who can come to recognise the relevance of global issues with respect to their local situation. She has developed a model based on what she sees as essential ‘capacities’ for global citizenship that should be fostered through higher education, namely: the capacity for critical examination of oneself and one’s traditions (the ‘examined life’); the capacity to see oneself as a citizen, not only of one’s local region or group, but also as bound to others by ties of recognition and concern (a world citizen); and the capacity to think what it might be like in the shoes of another, or to re-examine one’s own life through looking at the standpoint or situation of others (the ‘narrative imagination’) (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2000). Whilst her model involves a curriculum which includes fundamental knowledge of histories, religions and philosophies of other cultures, essential is the understanding of societies and humanity that is gained through this exploration (Nussbaum 1997). Its aim is to develop a critical ability in order to question received wisdom and challenge situations where there is injustice and inequality. This understanding of a global curriculum is based on promoting societal rather than market values; on challenging and educating students to see humanity and the value of others in places and situations in which they have difficulty (e.g. stereotypes, minorities, less privileged) and on developing in students an understanding of the conditions of lives different from their own (Nussbaum 2002). Students, and educators, should be challenged to define themselves, not primarily in terms of local group affinities and identities, but rather in terms of their belonging also to the wider community of humanity (Nussbaum 1997). Later in this chapter I will describe how this model helped to inform my construction of a ‘capability set’, used within the study for evaluating the extent to which students can be considered to hold a cosmopolitan outlook.

Others similarly see that an education for cosmopolitanism should take a critical approach to thinking about oneself and one’s position within the dynamics of global connectivities, pushing students to recognise inequalities and explore and learn how they can actively attempt to compensate for them (Rizvi 2009). The development of a ‘critical global imagination’ is seen by Rizvi (2009; 265) to be a force for individuals being able to question received wisdom and views about the way in which (capitalist) global systems might operate and develop, potentially increasing inequality and marginalisation of groups.

A cosmopolitan education should emphasise critical thought and respectful argument, learning how to understand and communicate with others in order to help students to be able to interpret and mediate between different cultures. It should promote mutual and intercultural understanding and sensitivity within an environment of openness and tolerance which recognises the importance of

one's own and other's values, development and freedoms (Bates 2005; Lasonen 2005; Marginson 2009; Nussbaum 1997).

### ***3.3.3 Becoming Intercultural through Cosmopolitan Learning***

I now turn the focus to the realities and practicalities of promoting an education for students which helps form the values for developing a more cosmopolitan outlook and a concern for global citizenship. With the increasing emphasis on the internationalisation agenda within higher education, the recognition of the potential for enhancing the global dimensions of courses and institutions is becoming ever more important. There is a move to encompass some of the values of cosmopolitanism within higher education through a process usually termed 'intercultural learning' or 'intercultural education' (Gill 2007; Ippolito 2007; Lasonen 2005; Leask 2005; Otten 2003; Volet and Ang 1998; Welikala and Watkins 2008) or cosmopolitan learning (Rizvi 2009).

The outcome of effective intercultural learning is usually described as becoming interculturally competent (Alred et al. 2003; Otten 2003; Ramsay et al. 1999; Stier 2006; Turner and Robson 2008). The concept of intercultural competence has been developed and described by a number of researchers and, although there are subtle differences, their definitions overlap considerably. I shall therefore summarise the main components – derived from a combination of both normative and empirically-based literature.

An intercultural encounter involves being actively engaged with some aspect of a different culture, and which results in bringing about change in an individual, through part of the process having been internalised (Sen Gupta 2003). Being intercultural or interculturally competent implies a form of behaviour or state of being. Akin to cosmopolitanism it can be considered as both a mindset and skillset or competence (Bennett and Bennett 2004; Hannerz 1990; Turner and Robson 2008; Vertovec and Cohen 2002). It depends upon the acquisition of a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes (Bredella 2003; Byram 2003; Lasonen 2005; Otten 2003; Sen Gupta 2003) and involves experiencing others and their situations, in order to reflect upon, analyse and act upon those experiences (Alred et al. 2006a; Bredella 2003). Knowledge of cultures and countries (one's own and others') and of social groups and practices informs understanding and cultural awareness (Byram et al. 2001; Lasonen 2005; Otten 2003). Skills of intercultural communication facilitate interactions; skills of reflection and analysis enable the consideration and recognition of the relativity of one's own and others' conventions, beliefs and values and the ability to make decisions about where there is a need for justice or tolerance. An interculturally competent individual needs to possess attitudes of curiosity, openness and flexibility, which enables the construction of a narrative imagination (Byram 2003; Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2000). Actions, informed by this process, are manifested in behaviour towards others. It is the adopting of a truly intercultural and cosmopolitan attitude which provokes a change in identity through re-discovery of the self (Gill 2007; Sen Gupta 2003).

Within higher education, intercultural competence can be gained through an internationalised curriculum and, importantly, through interactions with others (Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Ippolito 2007; Otten 2003; Volet and Ang 1998). Yet the literature shows that the co-existence of students from different backgrounds and cultures does not necessarily lead to meaningful interactions. There is potential for intercultural learning, and challenging cultural and social assumptions, to be realised from a diverse student group, but it is a question of how. As we saw in Chapter 2, there is an expressed desire by international students to mix with and learn from local students (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Mullins et al. 1995; Ward 2001) yet the converse appears rarely to apply. For local students, who might be unaware of, or avoid the issues and interactions with international students (Otten 2003), encounters with international students are often a transient exposure, from which they return to their relatively culturally homogeneous environments (Sen Gupta 2003). International students, on the other hand, cannot escape from their intercultural experience (variable though that might be) and inevitably undergo a transformative process in a way which is likely to be more profound than that of local students (Marginson 2009). Being in a foreign social and educational environment is likely to throw into contrast their, until now, familiar national, ethnic and social norms, hence they are more likely to be more sensitive to cultural differences than local students, who perhaps fail to recognise themselves in terms of their own culture (Marginson 2009; Otten 2003). Some international students have been shown to develop a more cosmopolitan outlook; their identity becoming defined in terms of a combination of their own cultural traditions, experiences of education abroad and of professional and cultural experiences (Gill 2007; Ippolito 2007; Montgomery 2010; Rizvi 2005a).

In recognition of the importance of elements of a cosmopolitan education for all students, a growing number of institutions, notably in Australia and Europe, are developing the concept of Internationalisation at Home (IaH) (Bournemouth University ; Crowther et al. 2000; Leeds Metropolitan University ; Malmö University ; Otten 2003; University of South Australia), which is a strategy to promote cosmopolitan values and outcomes through higher education, in recognition that a majority of students (and staff) in higher education do not study (or work) abroad. It draws upon the resource present within a multicultural student and staff population to provide an internationalised experience. IaH is based on a value-driven rather than target-driven approach and aims for a curriculum which enables students to understand the global context of their studies, helping them to prepare for living and working in an environment in which people have different values, perspectives and practices.

Intercultural or cosmopolitan learning then, demands a safe educational environment in which students are encouraged to learn equitably and actively with and about each other and their global environment. Gaining a heightened personal awareness through their intercultural encounters, students are



provoked also to examine their own lives and values in relation to those of others. My research questions therefore aim to ascertain the extent and nature of students' intercultural experiences and the part that pedagogy might play in influencing this. In the next part of the chapter I suggest how the 'capability approach' might provide a means of framing and evaluating the extent to which students are interculturally competent and of conceptualising educational conditions for expanding students' agency and awareness of their selves through their interactions with others.

### **3.4 Using the 'Capability Approach' to Frame Cosmopolitan Values**

I discuss in this next section how the essential qualities of what it is to be interculturally competent might be framed within higher education. I consider how the 'capability approach', developed initially by Amartya Sen to conceptualise justice in situations of poverty (1992, 1993, 1999, 2009), might provide a helpful way of thinking about how to formulate the goals of a learning experience which promotes a transformative, cosmopolitan-aware education. Influenced by the work of others who have applied the capability approach to higher education and professional development, I propose the construction of a 'capability set' for being intercultural.

#### ***3.4.1 The 'Capability Approach'*<sup>11</sup>**

The question is how the promotion of transformative educational experiences through the application of cosmopolitan values is to be achieved. Being somewhat abstract, some way of translating cosmopolitan thinking to the practicalities of the classroom is needed. The capability approach (Sen 1992; Sen 1993; Sen 1999; Sen 2009) is rooted in the field of human welfare and development and arises from a concern about the quality and value of the lives of individuals (rather than groups). It was developed by Sen as an alternative to a resource-based approach to thinking about the multi-dimensional effects of poverty in poor countries. Consideration of capabilities does not preclude paying attention to resources, but he considers them the multi-dimensional means to well-being, rather than the ends.

The fundamental concerns of the capability approach are with well-being and agency<sup>12</sup> of the individual and for justice and human relations which transcends boundaries and nationalities. It is therefore relevant, not only for thinking about situations of poverty, but also for thinking about society more widely, seeking to promote well-being and agency within individuals. Sen

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<sup>11</sup> It is also referred to as the 'Capabilities Approach', notably by Martha Nussbaum, on the basis that an individual possesses multiple capabilities. However Sen also emphasises that the capability approach is ultimately concerned with being able to achieve valued combinations of opportunities or capabilities.

<sup>12</sup> Sen describes agency as the ability to 'act and bring about change and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well'. (1999:19). His work on capability is 'particularly concerned with the agency role of the individual' (1999:19)

considers that the success of a society is reflected by the freedoms of the individuals within that society, hence the central tenet of the approach is about promoting freedom – which comes through the possession of capabilities. Freedom, Sen argues, is gained by making people effectively capable of realising their goals and pursuing their well-being; it enables individuals to make informed decisions about the kinds of lives they value living and to be able to live out those lives, should they choose. The capability approach does not therefore focus on the aggregate benefits to society afforded by a process or system, but rather considers the needs of the individuals within society.

For Sen, a capability is an opportunity, a potential or a freedom. Capabilities allow a person to do or be what he or she considers valuable; they present opportunities for individuals to make value decisions about what it is they consider important and worthy. The approach does not seek to dictate what sort of decisions and choices should be made but, rather, it promotes agency by expanding possibilities and alternatives as a means of enabling people to choose to enrich their own and other's lives in a positive way. It is concerned with a plurality of different features of people's lives, reflecting the diverse achievements that they hold to be of value. For some individuals the opportunities they value will be at the basic level of, for example, being well nourished or sheltered, for others it will be more complex, such as the opportunity to follow a career path or ambition.

The development and application of the capability approach has been further expanded and influenced by Martha Nussbaum. Whilst Sen's more general approach is about evaluating the quality of lives that people can lead, Nussbaum has taken a more philosophical approach, theorising a normative foundation upon which to promote justice and human dignity. She has developed a list of 'central human capabilities' which she sees are universally essential for living a fully human life and flourishing; moral entitlements for every human being (Nussbaum 2000; Nussbaum 2003; Nussbaum 2011)<sup>13</sup>.

Sen does not endorse the use of such lists as he considers that to do so would go against democratic principles of open agreement in societies about capabilities in context. His capability approach operates as a general framework rather than being translated into specific lists for different applications (Sen 2005; Sen 2009). Sen is not against listing capabilities for different contexts but is against defining fixed lists of basic capabilities which do not take account of general social discussion, public reason and agreement, and which might be narrowly theoretically constructed. He sees that it risks the creation of hard and fast criteria, which are hard to change; do not take into account the need for emphasis on different components according to situation and context; could lead to the ranking of some capabilities as of greater importance than others; and goes against the philosophy of all being fundamental to a situation (Sen 2004). Martha Nussbaum considers her central

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<sup>13</sup> Martha Nussbaum's central human capabilities list is: Life; Bodily Health; Bodily Integrity; Senses, Imagination and Thought; Emotions; Practical Reason; Affiliation; Other Species; Play; Control over One's Environment.

human capabilities list to be open to debate and revision (Nussbaum 2000; Nussbaum 2003; Nussbaum 2011) but argues that ‘vague’ capabilities or freedoms stop short of providing sufficient guidance and that undefined freedom for all cannot be considered a general good. She judges that for capabilities to operate in the interests of social justice and fairness, consideration must be given to evaluating relative freedoms, so that the freedoms claimed by some individuals do not constrain those of others. Yet capabilities which are central in some contexts are less relevant or even redundant in others. Nussbaum’s basic capabilities, like Sen’s fundamental freedoms, essential though they are for human functioning, become mostly taken for granted when applied to assessment of the quality of many lives in populations in highly developed countries.

Of course, providing potential and ability is one thing, but what actually happens in practice is quite another. Exercising a capability is termed the ‘functioning’. The opportunity, or freedom, that one has to express a functioning is a crucial consideration. It is not only capabilities which need to be present but also the means to exercise those capabilities should one choose. Sen describes the relationship between opportunity and achievement as being dependent upon ‘conversion factors’, which influence an individual’s ability to convert a capability into a functioning (Sen 1992). Conversion factors may be personal or internal (for example physical skills, gender, intelligence); social (for example social norms, hierarchies or power relations, or practices that unfairly discriminate); or, environmental (for example provision of facilities, means of transport or communication). In other words, conversion depends upon the complex interplay of circumstances in which one is living or operating.

Yet freedom also involves choice. People are individual. Capabilities, therefore, provide options that people ought to have but which they are also free not to exercise. There are situations in which one might not necessarily have full, or indeed any, control, over external influences, which determine whether capabilities can be expressed through functioning. Choice about one’s capabilities and functionings is influenced by choices made by others; indeed it can be influenced by the presence or absence of capabilities in others.

We can see then, that the freedom to be or to do (or to not be or do) is distinct from actually being or being. Martha Nussbaum argues strongly that evaluation of functioning does not equate with the possession of capability and that this dichotomy is a limitation of the capability approach in being able to demonstrate freedom and opportunity. Whereas Sen predominantly uses the language of freedom, Nussbaum emphasises the importance of opportunity – recognising the importance of actually having free choice in being able to express one’s capabilities. She captures this by her concept of a combined capability, which is made up of one’s internal capability, which is the capability-developed state, and one’s external capability, which is an indication of what is or can be achieved, given the conditions which allow functioning (Nussbaum 2000). Sen uses the term ‘capability set’ to describe

the personal combination of alternative functionings from which a person can choose.

The capability approach aims to expand individual freedoms, yet it is not a selfish approach. It is also about valuing the lives of others and recognising how actions of individuals can affect others. It is about negotiating the balance between enabling others, enabling one's self and, at the same time, being mindful of considerations of justice and fairness. The capability approach gives due concern for human diversity, reciprocity in social relations, and appreciation and valuing of the individual and the decisions they make. It offers a normative description of justice and equality.

In the next section I will describe the ways in which some authors have taken up capabilities within the context of higher education.

### ***3.4.2 Theorising the Capability Approach within Higher Education***

The capability approach has been applied to different aspects of education, including higher and professional education, some examples of which I will now describe. I will provide examples of capability sets which were formulated in order to provide some guidance as to the capabilities that should, in the authors' eyes, be developed in students or professionals. The development of these capability sets informed my thinking about the capabilities for being intercultural in a professional higher education setting and apply to my interview data. The main areas covered are: being educated; equality and justice; higher education; and professional education.

First is the essential capability to be educated (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002; Sen 1992; Sen 1999; Terzi 2007a). For Sen and Nussbaum, education is crucial for well-being and for expanding individual freedom, thereby allowing the development of other capabilities. A lack of education would substantially disadvantage the individual. Sen sees education as one of 'a relatively small number of centrally important beings and doings that are crucial to well-being' (Sen 1992:44). He equates education broadly with literacy, knowledge or information, whereas Nussbaum takes a more theorised, normative approach, especially through her model of three essential capacities for education, to which I referred earlier in the chapter (3.3.2). Recognising the potential of education in expanding individual freedom, she views it as a vehicle through which people can become able to question received wisdom and challenge inequality and injustice. Education features as an essential component in the realisation of her central human capabilities. Taking education as basic capability, or fundamental entitlement, Terzi's work considers conditions and criteria necessary for enabling the capability to be educated. Working with 'to be educated' as a fundamental capability she has devised a subset of capabilities for education functioning<sup>14</sup>. For her, unequal access to education

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<sup>14</sup> Terzi's capabilities are: literacy; numeracy; sociality and participation; learning dispositions; physical activities; science and technology; practical reason (Terzi 2007a).

constitutes an ‘unacceptable inequality’ (Terzi 2007a:41), reflected in her work on the just distribution of resources to students with disability and special educational needs (Terzi 2007b).

Others emphasise the necessity for equality and justice within education and use the capability approach as a way of conceptualising conditions which promote this (Unterhalter 2007; Vaughan 2007; Vaughan et al. 2007; Walker 2004; Walker 2006; Walker 2007). Vaughan, for example, focuses on the capability to participate in education, based on the case of girls’ schooling (Vaughan 2007). Her approach examines social, environmental, institutional and personal factors which influence opportunity for effective participation, and she has developed a capability set describing participation in education and the capabilities gained through education. Construction of the capability set was based on attaining educational capabilities based on Sen’s concepts of well-being and agency, and achievements and freedoms (Sen 1992).

Within higher education the capability approach has been used to imagine and evaluate social and pedagogical arrangements within universities and to evaluate capabilities of university graduates (Flores-Crespo 2007; Walker 2003; Walker 2004; Walker 2005; Walker 2006; Walker and McLean 2013). Walker’s focus is on social justice within higher education and the concept of the ‘good’ through education. Her work is based on education being of intrinsic importance – both a private and public good, of benefit to individuals as well as to society. Her justice-centred concept of education is as empowering and distributive, facilitating the ability of those who are disadvantaged. She presents the capability approach as a way of evaluating social and pedagogical arrangements which contribute to human flourishing and which should promote capabilities in students to expand their valued opportunities and choices post-graduation. Her ‘ideal-theoretical’ capability set<sup>15</sup> is influenced strongly by Nussbaum’s list. Flores-Crespo’s normative framework is intended as a means of informing classroom processes and institutional policy in order to create conditions which promote human freedom and development which expand opportunity for graduates. His framework for evaluation of capabilities in university graduates is based on Nussbaum’s central human capabilities and her three capacities for education (Nussbaum 1997), and is expressed as personal and professional beings and doings which enhance social opportunities and economic facilities (Sen 1999).

Finally, the area of professional higher education has been examined through the lens of capability, notably in the context of the potential role of universities in South Africa in contributing to poverty reduction through their education programmes (McLean and Walker 2012; McLean et al. 2008; Walker 2012; Walker and McLean 2013; Walker et al. 2009; Walker et al. 2008). This work is intended to stimulate dialogue about the roles and responsibilities of

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<sup>15</sup> Walker’s higher education capabilities are: practical reason; educational resilience; knowledge and imagination; learning disposition; social relations and social networks; respect, dignity and recognition; emotion integrity / emotions; bodily integrity (Walker 2006:128-129)

universities to educate professionals for the public good, including helping graduates become oriented towards contributing to public good.

Having looked at the work of others on capabilities through education, I now turn to explore a framework for the development of capabilities which draws upon the values of cosmopolitanism and intercultural competence – a capability set which I shall term intercultural capability. My purpose for developing the capability set is two-fold. As well as providing a tool for evaluating the intercultural capabilities of students, it could also be used as a mechanism by which to shed light on the way in which the educational environment might be structured for enabling intercultural learning and capability development. I have used the research data to test the set as an evaluative tool.

### ***3.4.3 A Cosmopolitan Education through the Lens of Capabilities***

The application of the capability approach to higher education calls for an examination of how its social and pedagogical arrangements can affect opportunities for individuals' freedoms; its potential, through these conditions, to enable individuals to make and enact choices about their lives; and to enhance society through concerns for others and for their lives. In proposing a capability set for being intercultural I am starting from the premise that most students in higher education in the UK have achieved the basic human capabilities (Nussbaum 2000; Sen 1992; Sen 1993; Terzi 2007a) which allow them to have reached this stage. I am exploring the framework as a means of capturing and defining their experience within the higher education environment, and to frame thinking about educational experiences that might lead to capabilities being gained by students at this stage, that influence the choices they make in their professional and personal lives. For a profession such as pharmacy, whose members have effective power to contribute to society, a capability set can point to what professional pharmacists ought to try to become. The choices made by pharmacy students, governed by their values and behaviours, will impact upon the lives and well-being of the population of patients and public which they serve. Capabilities-based professionalism (McLean and Walker 2012; Walker 2012; Walker and McLean 2013; Walker et al. 2009) requires professionals to attend to the lives and circumstance of those in need of their services, irrespective of class or race, to promote justice and equity in the treatment and consideration of others.

Of course students do not enter higher education as blank sheets of paper, nor as homogeneous beings, but rather come with their own individual personalities, values, traditions and identities. They come with their own capability sets, shaped by previous experiences, including educational experiences, therefore central values, needs and hopes which are held as worthy to each individual will differ. Individual freedom is of intrinsic importance to the capability approach, hence one might question the establishment of a framework which does not take account of what different students might or might not choose to do. This goes against the central

philosophy both of capabilities, which promotes freedoms, and cosmopolitanism, which celebrates differences. Also the role of higher education is not to prescribe to students what they should do or be (Jonathan 2001; Walker 2003; Walker 2006). What the capability approach aims for, however, is to develop a sense of what it is to live ethically or well, both for one self and for others, through being able to compare and consider alternatives in order to come to informed and considered choices (Walker and Unterhalter 2007). Framing education in terms of capabilities contributes to promoting agency and identity in students. The intention of creating the intercultural capability set, therefore, is not to dictate or constrain, but to enhance freedom and choice to be and do by offering another perspective to students. It is a mechanism by which students might become more aware of their own selves and come to value their fellows to a greater extent; a mechanism to illustrate the common humanity amongst them and the value to be gained through the intercultural relationships they form with each other. Applying the capability approach to intercultural learning is potentially a means by which the principles of cosmopolitanism living might be explored and enacted within the educational environment in order to illustrate and help to develop potential and broaden horizons in individuals for their future lives. It provides a platform upon which students can make choices about their identity, both during and following the formal period of education.

I now turn to the applications of the capability set, firstly for evaluating the intercultural capability of students and, secondly, for informing thinking about an academic environment which supports expansion of capabilities. I look first to the issue of being able to 'assess' capability, if not a measureable skill. The distinction between evaluation of capabilities and assessment of competencies or skills is an important one. The thrust of the capability approach is about justice, equality, well-being and agency; it is about what individuals are able to be and to do. Its axis of evaluation is that of identifying and establishing conditions which enable freedom for individuals to flourish and to exercise decisions based on what they have reason to value. The thrust of the skills-based or competence-based approach is that of bringing students to a common minimum standard; it is about what they can do at a snapshot in time. Capabilities are about allowing students to develop personally and socially, as well as educationally. They are not necessarily concerned with academic or competence achievement, although some skills might need to be present in order to allow functioning.

In arguing that capabilities for cosmopolitanism are something worthy of being developed, we need to ask how we know whether or not they have been achieved. This immediately presents a problem in the form of the relationship between capability and functioning – between the potential and the actual. Evaluation of functionings as a proxy for capability may be a convenient method - and indeed the only practical method – of assessing the development or presence or absence of capabilities within the educational environment. The pitfall in measuring functionings as proxy for capabilities, as discussed earlier, is that this can mask the presence of capability behind the functioning. The

ability, or the ability to choose, to utilise capabilities varies from person to person. Take the example of a group of students working on a class presentation. Two students within the group contribute little to the discussion and might be viewed as having little capability for expressing their own voice. One student however, does not see the value of learning with others, is disinterested in the work and chooses not to participate. The other student, brimming with ideas, wishes to engage with the group but, because she is an international, non-native speaker, finds it difficult to participate, hampered by the tendency of others in the group to ignore her. She does not have the conversion factors to enable her functioning. Hence apparent similarity in functioning does not necessarily indicate equality of experience. Within the educational environment individual agency may be profoundly affected by personal and social relationships and norms, and being free to make and exercise one's own choices is affected by the choices and actions of others. Without probing further than functionings, therefore, evaluation of capabilities risks becoming akin to measuring other curriculum outcomes. Evaluation of capabilities then, must take account of the freedoms or opportunities students have had to choose; it needs to consider the story behind the end result. Probing this 'truth' about capabilities and functioning through the use of interviews is something I have had to consider as part of my research. I have evaluated the presence or absence of capabilities and reported functionings through the words that students used.

The capability set could also be a potential tool for informing thinking about creating an academic environment which enables student agency and self-development, and which helps to illuminate the features which foster agency, justice and the maximising of capability. Students can be constrained or enabled by social and pedagogical arrangements as well as by personal or relational factors. Choices made by university staff about pedagogical practices influence the opportunities and choices available to students. In this regard the conversion factors which allow capabilities to be converted to functionings must also be considered. I have discussed above the difficulty in knowing, when a functioning is absent, whether it is actually due to a lack of capability or functioning. In the latter case the important issue is to understand through what mechanism the functioning is restricted and if it is a factor of the pedagogical structure. If, during the educational process, students are not given the opportunity to use their capabilities, we cannot know if they have them. Furthermore it inhibits students from further expanding their capabilities. In Martha Nussbaum's terms, it is about enabling students' combined capabilities. My study therefore aims to evaluate the extent of intercultural capability across a population of pharmacy students and also to shed light on personal, social and pedagogical factors which appear to enable or to constrain development.

#### ***3.4.4 Theoretical Basis for an Intercultural Capability Set***

The development of the capability set was informed by both theoretical and empirical data; by capability lists developed by others in the spheres of



professional and higher education and from themes arising from my interview data. Through an iterative process of creating the framework and testing against the data, which is described in the next chapter, I have proposed a capability set for being intercultural.

The process that generates a capability set is important. The method of selection of capabilities should be transparent and justified; Sen maintains that the choice of capabilities should not be purely derived from theory and should be open to public debate and that lists should not be regarded as final and fixed (Sen 2005; Sen 2009). Neither should any capabilities be given weighting over another. Nussbaum describes capabilities as having to be 'thick' and 'vague', meaning that they should not be too narrowly-derived or overly specific (Nussbaum 2000) and Walker reminds us that the capability approach in education is for 'complexity and multi-dimensionality, not single capabilities' (Walker 2006). Robeyns, in her work on applying the capability approach to gender inequality, conceived a comprehensive list of criteria which should be applied when drawing up a capability set (Robeyns 2003) and which take the above into account. They are:

1. *Explicit formulation*: the list should be explicit, discussed and defended.
2. *Methodological justification*: one should clarify and scrutinise the method that has generated the list and justify its appropriateness.
3. *Sensitivity to context*: lists will tend to be more abstract or concrete as appropriate to fulfilling the objectives for the situation in which they are applied.
4. *Different levels of generality*: this involves a two-stage process - firstly drawing up an 'ideal' list, followed by a second more 'pragmatic' list which takes realities and constraints into account.
5. *Exhaustiveness and non-reducibility*: the listed capabilities should include all important elements, which are not reducible to each other. There may be some, but not substantial, overlap.

The process of constructing my capability set was iterative, as I moved between capability theory and capability set, the guidelines above and my empirical data. It was essential that the defining of a capability set did not inadvertently undermine the freedom or agency of any students. I will now describe how the inclusion of each of the capabilities in my initial intercultural capability set was informed by theoretical and empirical data. In the next chapter I will describe how applying the capability set to a selection of empirical data prompted a revision of some of the initial capabilities.

Taking each capability in turn I will describe how this initial set was derived. In examining and thinking about other's capability sets I concentrated on those which had the greatest relevance to my work. I looked not only at their

overarching capabilities but also the detail or attributes that described what was encompassed by those capabilities. I also derived what I considered ideal 'intercultural attributes' from my empirical data and reading of the literature about internationalised higher education. As I describe in the next chapter, my first step was to consider these more specific elements, or attributes, that defined the overarching capabilities. This helped me then to define what I considered to be the most relevant capabilities for my study.

*Practical reason:* Able to make life choices based on informed, critical, ethically-sound, reflective, independent thought and reason.

This is one of Martha Nussbaum's list of central capabilities, which she considers as being universally applicable. She views this capability as particularly fundamental and it thus tends to feature widely in other's lists (Flores-Crespo 2007; Nussbaum 2000; Terzi 2007a; Walker 2006; Walker et al. 2008). I initially included this capability as it seemed to encompass the necessity for informed reflective consideration when making choices that involved the situations of others.

*Social Relations and Participation:* Able to form social and working relationships with others; able to work with others for learning, working, discussion, problem-solving and presentation; willing to interact outside of comfort zone; able/willing to promote dialogue; able and allowing others to be included and to participate; using inter-cultural communication to communicate, listen and question and allowing others to do the same.

This capability was strongly influenced by findings from the empirical data and by Walker's list of higher education capabilities (Walker 2006). An element of other capability sets within education (Terzi 2007a; Vaughan 2007), it also encompasses something of Nussbaum's capability of 'affiliation' which is the second of her two fundamental capabilities (Nussbaum 2011). The literature on international students and my interview data highlighted the problems that can arise through working with, or being unable to work with, others and the important role of communication. I therefore used this capability to include actively participating with others, facilitated by intercultural communication.

*Respect, Dignity and Recognition:* Having respect for and showing respect to others; being treated with respect; recognising a responsibility to others; having a voice and allowing others their voice; recognising the value of other's contributions; having the value of one's contributions acknowledged; accepting difference; respecting alternative points of view.

The fostering of equality and agency within higher education depends upon this capability. It enables students to develop respect for others at university and beyond. As future pharmacists students are also bound by their ethical code, whose principles embody the need for pharmacists to respect and consider the interests of others (General Pharmaceutical Council 2013). It also

draws upon cosmopolitanism values of respecting others who are different and Nussbaum's capacity for being able to see oneself as bound to other human beings (Appiah 2005; Appiah 2006; Nussbaum 2000).

*Mind and Imagination:* Seeking to understand others, their worlds and situations; open-mindedness; open to different perspectives and points of view; willing to engage in moral and ethical debate; able to accepting disagreement; willing to explore disagreement; able to imagine and appreciate one's local and wider connectivities.

Presence of this capability indicates an orientation towards cosmopolitanism. Whilst others include similar overarching capabilities in their lists - for example, 'Senses, Imagination and Thought' (Nussbaum 2000), 'Knowledge and Imagination' (Walker 2006) or 'Imagination' (Walker et al. 2008) - to express being able to gain knowledge or to use one's mind, I have employed this specifically to express being able to engage with knowledge about others and to use one's mind in finding out about others and their lives.

*Enquiry and Reflection:* Seeking to learn from others, about others, their worlds and situations; not assuming one's own way is necessarily correct or best; able to think about one's own situation, values, beliefs, received knowledge, practices and behaviours in the light of those of others.

This capability requires students to actively and reflectively engage with cosmopolitanism, in a way that challenges their own values and identities. The capability is inspired by Nussbaum's capacities for the 'examined life' and 'narrative imagination' which comes through engagement with others and their worlds (Nussbaum 2000). As far as I am aware, this capability is not included in any other capability sets.

The capability set is based on the premise that the development of intercultural capability is of value for individuals and looks to the interplay between students as a means of helping them to develop more cosmopolitan selves.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter cosmopolitanism has been advanced as a platform upon which contemporary meanings and understandings of globalisation can be explored and developed from the perspective of social justice. Cosmopolitanism is a culturally and morally-focussed philosophy which depends fundamentally upon self-view and world-view. A cosmopolitan education can be seen as one which forces students to cross borders or boundaries- within and between societies and cultures - which exist both in the mind and in geographical borders. Cultures and identities are dynamic and changing, and influenced by our constantly challenging experiences. This is so for students, who develop their own dynamic cultures and identities through transnational and intercultural experiences. The fundamental principle of a cosmopolitan education is that of fostering the ability to view one's familiar world as if from

a distance which supports understanding of others; in other words, to become closer to realising Nussbaum's ideal of a global citizen with narrative imagination. A recognition of and empathy with others is the desired effect of true intercultural learning and depends upon the acquisition of a range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours.

The practicalities of creating a learning environment which promotes the values of cosmopolitanism and offers students the opportunity to become more interculturally aware are yet to be discovered and developed within the higher education sector. My research was motivated by a desire to find something that might provide a means of operationalising cosmopolitan values within higher education. The capability approach is a means of seeking to expand opportunity and choice to students; to help them choose for themselves (and for their relationships with others) what they consider to be of value. I have therefore developed an ideal, normative capability set for being interculturally capable, to help inform and evaluate the development of intercultural capability in students. My capability set was informed by other capability sets developed in the field of higher and professional education, and by early data from student interviews. Given the caveats about prescribed lists which I have discussed, the list is intended to be a starting point; a springboard from which to stimulate awareness and debate about fostering values of interculturality and global citizenship through higher education.

Evaluating capability and functioning can also help to shed light on personal, social and pedagogical conditions which enable or constrain capability and student self-development. Enabling students to develop intercultural capability and functioning during public-good higher education, through fostering an ethic of respect, concern and interest in the classroom, could continue to influence their outlook in their personal and professional lives after university.

In the next chapter I describe the process of constructing the capability set more fully, including the iterative process of refining my initial list. In Chapters 5, 6 and 7 I use student interview data to analyse the extent to which the capability framework might provide a normative tool to conceptualise and evaluate the extent to which students are able to develop as interculturally capable beings through their higher education experiences and to discover some of the factors which have a bearing upon this.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology and Research Design: Operationalising a Capability Set

In my study I examine 44 undergraduate pharmacy students' accounts of their intercultural experiences whilst at university through the lens of the capability approach as described in Chapter 3. In this chapter I provide a description and rationale of the research design and methods used in the case study. Before this, however, I offer an account of my research journey, describing how the initial stimulus for my project came through involvement with a new course taught in part at an international site, yet how interrogation of early data provoked a profound shift in my thinking and hence shift in focus of the study. Discussion of the research design includes how I paid attention to ethical issues, especially as I was an 'insider' researcher, that is, an academic member of staff in the School in which I interviewed the students. Finally I outline how data analysis was undertaken, culminating in the construction of a capability set for being interculturally capable.

#### 4.1 The Research Site

In order to protect the identities of the university and research participants I have not named the research site. It is a 'research-intensive' UK university, with a strong emphasis on international higher education. The university promotes itself as a leader in internationalised education, committed to providing an international education for all, with internationalisation embedded in all university activities<sup>16</sup>. I have changed references to the name of the site in documents in the appendices to 'University X' in order to protect anonymity.

There are a number of Schools of Pharmacy within UK universities which have developed so-called 2+2 MPharm degree courses with university campuses in Malaysia, in which students spend the first two years of their degree at a university in Malaysia, studying equivalent modules to those taught in the first two years of the course in the 'home' School of Pharmacy in the UK. They then spend the final two years of the course at the home campus, where they join the students who are taking the MPharm at the UK institution. These courses are taught either at a branch campus or through an arrangement with a different higher education institution in Malaysia. It is in one of these Schools that my research was conducted. The courses are fully accredited by both the Malaysian Pharmacy Board and the UK General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), which allows students to register to practise as pharmacists in the UK and additionally allows Malaysian students to register in Malaysia.

First year intake onto the MPharm at the UK campus (which is the focus of my research) is typically 160 students, of which approximately 25% are international students, while intake for the first two cohorts at Malaysia Campus, who participated in my study, was 40 and 45 respectively. Allowing

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<sup>16</sup> I have not referenced the documents in order to protect anonymity of the institution.

for loss of students during the first two years of the course, students enter a third year of about 180 individuals. Additionally there is the opportunity for UK-based students to spend a semester or the whole of their second year studying at the Malaysia Campus. These students are known as ‘mobility students’.

#### **4.2 Account of Research**

I am a pharmacist and member of academic staff in the School and had a key role in the development and organisation of the 2+2 course. Involved with the necessary arrangements that were being made in terms of standards and quality, I was concerned about possible problems when the transition to the UK was made, in terms of the dynamics between the different campus groups and the adjustment of the Malaysia Campus students to the UK School environment and systems. This interest in the students’ well-being provided the original stimulus for my research. Although the Malaysia Campus students are taught the same material as the UK students in their first two years, the teaching environment differs in a number of ways: students at the Malaysia Campus are mostly Malaysian, with a small number of international students, and they are a smaller group of students, within a much smaller university campus and School. They join a significantly larger group of students in the UK at the start of the third year, when there is quite a shift in content and style of teaching, to become more clinically-focussed and problem-based. I therefore wanted to investigate how these students adjust to the UK School course and environment, and the extent to which this could be, helped (or hindered) by the School of Pharmacy and university.

My initial plan was to take the 2+2 course as the case for study, so my initial research questions related to both UK and Malaysia Campus student and staff experiences of the course. I was interested in the extent of interaction between students from the two campuses and in their motivation for and experience of education in an internationalised higher education environment. However as my reading and thinking progressed it became clear that situation of these students was part of the broader issue of the relationship between students, most obviously from different cultures. Moreover it was not something exclusive to the 2+2 course but had a wider application to both UK and international students. As shown in Chapter 2, there is often segregation within the learning, as well as the social, environment between students from different cultures and in many cases a mis-match between expectations and reality of university. I was struck by the emphasis on international students in so many studies, yet I saw that home students are also such a crucial factor. The emphasis on considering only international students’ perspectives and experiences creates, as I see it, a one-sided story which often fails to identify or acknowledge the issues common to all students in learning with others or to take wider account of the overall picture. My study therefore takes both home and international students as subjects.

I moved to my current position through a number of iterations of the focus of my research as I worked through the literature, talked with students, re-

considered, and looked at different aspects of internationalised higher education, its purpose and values. This position is reflected in the subject material of the previous theoretical chapter. Examination of preliminary data from the 12 pilot interviews threw into sharp focus the fact that, although I had primarily been concerned with the 2+2 course and Malaysia Campus students, I needed to consider the issues of intercultural relationships which applied across the whole student population. I therefore shifted my main focus of interest in the welfare of students within the course, to a broader consideration of the value of the educational and social experience that could potentially be gained by all students from an internationalised higher education environment. Reading, supervisory discussions, writing and thinking about this issue led me to frame my work in terms of capabilities for being interculturally competent and the construction of a university education which provides opportunities for students to develop the values of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship.

The case therefore became the undergraduate students in years three and four of the MPharm rather than the 2+2 course, with the focus no longer on the course *per se* but on the extent to which students are and can be more intercultural and cosmopolitan in their outlook. This shift necessarily resulted in a change in research questions<sup>17</sup>, with the main question having become: ‘To what extent do students on the MPharm course display intercultural competence?’

In order to address this overarching question the research questions used to frame development of my research plan and interviews were:

- What do students understand by intercultural contact?
- What are the students’ experiences of intercultural contact?
- What factors influence the extent and nature of intercultural contact<sup>17</sup>?
- What factors influence the extent and nature of intercultural learning<sup>18</sup>?
- To what extent does the pedagogy within the MPharm promote or inhibit intercultural learning?
- In what way does the experience of the MPharm course prepare students for working in an intercultural professional pharmacy environment / as interculturally competent pharmacists?

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<sup>17</sup> Original research questions were:

What is the experience of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?

What is the experience of the UK Campus students of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?

What are the experiences of UK and Malaysia Campus staff (academic, technical and administrative) of the Malaysia Campus students joining the UK course?

What effect will the Malaysia campus students have upon the School of Pharmacy, its students and staff?

<sup>18</sup> I have used the terms ‘intercultural contact’ and ‘intercultural learning’ to distinguish between interactions between students of different cultures, be it at a superficial or more meaningful level, and learning with and about students from different cultures.

### **4.3 Reflexivity and the Personal Research Journey**

As a reflexive practitioner in pharmacy and a researcher it was essential to acknowledge how my background, concerns, values and expectations might influence the design, conduct, analysis, interpretation and conclusions of the study. As a scientist by background I came initially from a 'positivistic approach' to research whereby the world can be quantified and explained objectively. However, being a practitioner and teacher in clinical pharmacy practice rather than experimental science meant that before embarking on PhD study I was familiar with some principles and methods within qualitative research. My practice as a pharmacist – and the philosophy of my teaching – has always been one which emphasises the recognition of individual (patient) needs. My notion of what are important values in a pharmacist undoubtedly shaped my views about the importance and potential for helping (pharmacy) students embrace cosmopolitan values through their higher education. The initial stimulus for and direction of my research – at the outset on a concerned but perhaps rather a superficial level - was inevitably framed by my own intrinsic values and beliefs, but then informed, challenged and moulded by my close involvement with the literature on higher education values and cosmopolitanism. From observing students and initially thinking in terms of 'human nature' as a major determinant of their intercultural behaviours, I have now gained a greater awareness of the potential of education to shape the development of values and identity.

My position within the research was that I had a role both as insider and outsider. Being a member of staff within the School and intimately involved with the MPharm course I was an insider and my conducting of the research interviews, data analysis and interpretation was influenced by my insider knowledge and perspectives. It is likely to have affected the way in which students behaved and responded in interviews. However I was also an outsider by being a member of staff, not part of the undergraduate student population. Being a white, British female made me an insider or an outsider for different students and I had constantly to be aware during interviews and data analysis of the possible bias that might be introduced through this – either because of my own ethnocentric viewpoint or because of the way in which others viewed me. As a researcher it was important to take as much of an outsider view as possible, remaining as open as I could to what students were telling me. I had to seek the 'insider' or 'emic' perspective of the students rather than imposing my own (Mason 2002a; Stake 1995) and accordingly I sought to explore students' perceptions, understandings and interpretations of their situations.

### **4.4 A Phenomenological Approach**

My study is concerned with how pharmacy students interact with each other, socially as well as for academic and professional learning. It seeks to understand with how they perceive themselves and their education in relation to others and how they affect the environment for each other. In studying their intercultural experiences I also sought to understand the way in which



students' prior and current experiences shape their worldview. My research questions therefore focussed on the views, perceptions and experiences of individual students undertaking the MPharm degree. I took a phenomenological approach to the investigation as I explored the meanings that students attach to their everyday life and the way in which their meanings are developed from their lived experiences and interactions with each other (Cohen et al. 2007; Creswell 1997; Marshall and Rossman 2006). Gaining an understanding of the meanings behind actions and behaviours involves gaining an understanding of thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values and assumptions that both shape and arise from these meanings. I therefore used face-to-face interaction and conversations to elicit perspectives and understanding through the use of semi-structure interviews. These allowed me, through creating a situation of trust, to hold reasonably in-depth, flexible discussions, enabling participants' perspectives to unfold. In exploring and seeking to understand students' intercultural experiences I was mindful not to influence students' responses through my own preconceived ideas and assumptions and, through careful listening, attempted to interpret fairly what students were saying.

Employing an initially deductive approach<sup>19</sup> (Bryman 2004), I drew upon theories of cosmopolitanism as I developed an interest and understanding of the potential of education to foster the acquisition of intercultural competence. The research became increasingly iterative as I explored links between theory and initial findings from the pilot interviews, which challenged and began to crystallise my thoughts about the direction of my research. This led to a redefining of my research questions. With this in mind I adjusted the interview questions for the main study (Appendix 1) in order to more closely match what I was seeking. It was after the interviews that I started to think about the 'capability approach' as a model for conceptualising and operationalizing cosmopolitan values through higher education. The design and conducting of the interviews therefore were not influenced by the capability approach; it was in the later data analysis stage that I interrogated the data with respect to an initial capability set. Aiming to articulate the relationship between theories of cosmopolitanism and capabilities and the picture described by the data, I constructed and tested a theoretical capability set for being interculturally capable, the principles of which I described in the previous chapter.

#### **4.5 The Case Study**

A case study is a study of a specific instance, object or phenomenon (Cohen et al. 2007; Stake 1994). In providing an example of actual happenings it offers an illustrative picture through which to explore and understand ideas, theories and principles, which can aid understanding of similar situations (Robson 2011; Stake 1995). In my study the case is a cohort of 44 students on an MPharm course, studied with the intention of being more widely applicable to the field of internationalised higher education. Case studies provide an opportunity to observe effects in real context, hence can establish cause and

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<sup>19</sup> In a deductive approach, theory is used to guide the research

effect (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989; Stake 1995). The emphasis is on the subjects or objects of the case itself, rather than the specific methods of investigation employed (Bryman 2004; Robson 2011). The role or effect of the researcher in collection, analysis and reporting of data is important, as reporting of data involves blending descriptions of events or data along with their analysis (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989).

A case study is a 'bounded system' (Cohen et al. 2007; Creswell 1997), bounded by time and place. In this study the case is bounded by being a study involving a single population of students on a degree course, within a specified time frame (December 2008 - May 2010). Though a specific instance of study, a case study may involve grouping together individual studies as a 'collective case study' in order to gain a fuller picture (Stake 1995). This is not a collective case study but, because I take a population of MPharm students as my case, it contains multiple components in terms of the individual students studied, which allows both within-case and cross-case analysis of those individuals as they relate to the overall picture.

There are some disadvantages or potential pitfalls of case study research, which I have attempted to minimise. I have employed a single method data collection (semi-structured interviews), as multiple methods of data collection can cause complexities. I have sought to balance a consideration of the whole picture as well as individual student features (Blaxter et al. 2006; Bryman 2004; Cohen et al. 2007) by evaluating data at both the individual level and across the whole data set. The extent of generalisability of cases cannot be assured, given that they are unique and dynamic situations. However the aim of my research is to understand and explain the experience of an internationalised higher education and how it might impinge upon the potential for students to develop interculturality. Although studied within pharmacy there are implications for higher education more generally, which I have shown through relating my findings to evidence from other studies and to a normative capability framework. It is precisely the presentation of the findings as a case - here based on a case study of pharmacy students - which adds appeal and a 'real life' element from which others can take the message (Cohen et al. 2007; Stake 1995). The wider usefulness of findings can be thought of in terms of transferability, or 'naturalistic generalisation' (Melrose 2009; Stake 1995), in which the audience infers for themselves the usefulness or transferability of the findings to their own situation and experiences. Bassey's (1999) alternative perspective of 'fuzzy generalisation' (p46) acknowledges that findings from case studies do not represent certainties or probabilities, but rather provide an indication of possibilities within the context of the particular case.

Depending upon the primary focus and purpose of the research, the case for study varies and can be classed as intrinsic or instrumental (Stake 1995). In an intrinsic case study the primary focus is that of the case, the person, the situation itself. It is a unique instance and the main purpose is to learn about the case rather than necessarily for the purpose of generalisation. Mine,

however, is an instrumental case study, in which the primary focus is upon understanding the research questions or illuminating some phenomenon, which could also be studied or applied in situations other than this specific instance (Cousin 2009).

#### **4.6 Semi-structured Interviews**

The primary aim of my research is to understand something of students' intercultural experiences within higher education, and in particular about how educational and social conditions can affect them, in order to shape ideas about possibilities. Interviews were therefore considered to be an appropriate method of data collection. The interview is based on the assumption that elements of this social world can be understood through talk and that knowledge can be gathered or constructed by listening and interpreting what is said and how (Mason 2002b). Interviews thereby provided an opportunity for me to learn about what was important to the students in the study, and derive interpretations from their talk, as they described and made meaning from their experiences. Interviewing potentially yields rich insight into people's lives as it provides an opportunity by which participants can discuss situations, individual interpretations of their world, and express their own points of view, attitudes and feelings (Cohen et al. 2007; Kvale and Brinkman 2009; May 1997). Importantly, interviews allow the exploration of experiences, actions and relationships in context rather than simply describing behaviours (Tierney and Dilley 2002). Yet the ideas and values that might be expressed during an interview do not exist in a tangible, common form, but are shaped by social practices, contexts and relationships; the knowledge, or story which is constructed within the interview is not concrete and stand-alone, but dependent upon the relationships within the interview and the organisation and direction of the interview (Cousin 2009; Fontana and Frey 2008).

I used semi-structured interviews as my data collection method. The research interview has been described as a 'professional conversation' (Kvale and Brinkman 2009:2), based on guided conversations of daily life, in which the central role of the personal interaction is key. The semi-structured interview approach applies structure and purpose to guide the interview, whilst allowing spontaneity and freedom for participants to talk about their situations, and providing for flexibility in the direction and emphasis of the interview as necessary (Bryman 2004; Cousin 2009; Kvale and Brinkman 2009). It has also been described as 'responsive interviewing' (Rubin and Rubin 2005:15), indicating the dynamic process that is adapted and modified as it progresses. The responsive nature of the interview also means that no two interviews are alike, shaped as they are by the thought processes and words of both parties. This method therefore allowed me to be flexible and probe responses as necessary, whilst retaining a sense of the structure and ensuring I covered all intended areas for questioning.

My role as interviewer in the direction and outcome of the process therefore was paramount: I listened to hear the meaning of what was being told to me

about students' experiences, asking questions for clarification of themes and opinions. I employed a standard interview question guide to ensure a similar framework for each interview but I determined, on the basis of answers received, the direction and content of subsequent questions (Rubin and Rubin 2005). The open-ended nature of the interview allowed for collecting data which was beyond the scope of my pre-conceived notions of how things are likely to be (Arksey and Knight 1999), and was facilitated by being sensitive, adaptable and attuned to the person being interviewed rather than relying on a precise framework of questions (Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Warren 2002). Yet an interview is a false situation; a constructed event which deals with what people say they do (Arksey and Knight 1999); what is told is not necessarily the same as what is genuinely thought or done. The trustworthiness of the data could be compromised by, for example, participants saying what they think the interviewer wants to hear or self-censorship meaning that they do not speak openly. I had to consider this, being a tutor within the School. Also, discussion of issues perceived as sensitive, for example about race, culture or views of others, are more prone to this (Osmond and Roed 2010; Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern 2002; Ward et al. 2005). It is less likely to happen in interviews with individuals than with groups (Harrison and Peacock 2010).

What I brought to the process was considerable expertise and experience as a pharmacist in conducting interviews, albeit in somewhat different situations (for example asking patients about symptoms, medicines and medical conditions). I am practised at interviewing individuals, framing and adapting questions 'on the spot', probing for elaboration and dealing with issues of a sensitive or personal nature. As far as possible therefore I endeavoured to fulfil the attributes of the 'interview craftsman' as described by Kvale and Brinkman (2009) which emphasises that a craft must be learnt and that good results cannot be achieved simply by following a formula. I drew upon my experience, used pilot interviews and reflected upon my performance as I progressed through the process, making amendments to my approach as necessary. Of course, the student participants and I come to the interview from somewhat different perspectives – perspectives which changed throughout the conversation. I, for example, would shift between perspectives which included teacher, researcher, tutor or pharmacist. However I was also a 'similar' (Archer 2007) in that I understood the context of the School of Pharmacy and studying to be a pharmacist. My questioning style reflects my personality and stance, and changed as the relationship or direction changed and developed during the interview (Rubin and Rubin 2005).

There are some potential disadvantages of the research interview (Cohen et al. 2007). Inevitably the interview is influenced by me as researcher, for example in terms of my interpersonal relationship or my understanding or interpretation of topics discussed (Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Stake 1995) or the power differential which can affect the responses of the interviewees (Kvale and Brinkman 2009). The relationship, and establishment of rapport, is therefore essential in order to gain as much as possible from the interview and in being able to see situations from the perspectives of the participants (Fontana and

Frey 1994). Yet there is a tension between establishing closeness whilst still remaining distanced in order to maintain the trustworthiness of the data (May 1997). I aimed to establish rapport and show that I was genuinely interested in what participants had to tell me. I actively listened and took participants back to statements they had made earlier in the interview. I primarily asked questions and listened to participants, relying on the tape recording for detail. I jotted down important words occasionally to jog my memory at a later stage or to remind me to return to something said. This allowed me to devote my fullest attention to the conversation, as I aimed to make interviews as conversational as possible. I made it clear that participation, non-participation or comments made would have no bearing upon marks, that the conversation was for the tape only, that reported findings would be anonymised and, when necessary, that I would not be offended by any views expressed in interviews. Through these measures I also sought to reduce the power differential, helping participants feel more able to share their stories (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

I ensured standardised procedures for gathering data, in terms of invitation to interview, place of interview, information provided (Appendix 3) and interview questions schedule (Appendix 1). I held interviews in my office, which has the disadvantage of not being a neutral space and could therefore have signalled a power or comfort differential. However it did provide the advantage of being able to access an interview room at short notice which was certainly necessary in some cases. All interviews were therefore held in the same room. I addressed situational factors as far as possible through means such as diverting my 'phone, attaching a sign to the office door so as not to be disturbed, offering refreshments to participants, particularly as they would often be between classes, and dressing smartly but not too formally. Following each interview I wrote a few reflective notes about the interview (Cousin 2009; Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

Another consideration regarding validity is that the transcribed words do not always convey the intended meaning (Marshall and Rossman 2006; Stake 1995) or might be incorrect (Bryman 2004). Even though I had audio recordings of the interviews to which I could listen, the visual clues, which help convey meaning behind words, are lost. Transcription of interviews is time-consuming and potentially produces vast amounts of text (Bryman 2004). I therefore used a third party transcriber to carry out initial transcription of the interviews. In order to produce as accurate or useful transcript as possible, I re-read these transcriptions whilst listening to recordings in order to correct errors, fill in missing information and add comments as necessary. An example of a transcript is shown in Appendix 2.

#### ***4.6.1 Sampling and Recruitment***

The sampling strategy I employed was the use of a non-probability or purposive sample (Bryman 2004; Cohen et al. 2007), in that I determined to

base my study on students from years three and four of the MPharm course<sup>20</sup>. I wished to recruit as widely as possible, as credibility of interview data is enhanced by ensuring that a variety of perspectives are reflected (Rubin and Rubin 2005), hence I offered the chance for interview to all students amongst this population. I therefore employed a volunteer sampling strategy (Cohen et al. 2007). A disadvantage of volunteer sampling is that one has no control over who volunteers. It can introduce bias because participants self-select for interview. One cannot therefore be sure of the motives for interview – for example an interest in the research, wishing to use the opportunity to ‘have one’s say’, feeling an obligation to participate or simply being well-intentioned. Because of this the sample might not necessarily be representative of the wider population.

I recruited students for interview by means of a personal approach. For the first round of interviews (2008-09 session) I recruited volunteers by speaking to the class of either third or fourth years as a whole. Before taking a lecture with each year of students I took a few minutes to describe the project, why I was doing the research and asked for volunteers. Students were assured that participating was entirely voluntary, that the information was confidential and would not affect their marks in any way. Students who were willing to be interviewed were asked to complete a form (Appendix 3). The forms, which were two-sided, also acted as an information sheet, giving a description of the research project. They were handed out to all students present, and all forms, whether completed or not, were collected in at the end of the teaching session, so as not to make a distinction between those volunteering or not. Detail requested on the forms was student name(s), preference for interview singly or as a group of two or three, and e-mail address. I was initially unsure of the likely response I would attain from this approach. However I was quite overwhelmed by the strength of the response, with a total number of 51 students (28 year 3; 23 year 4) indicating their interest in being interviewed for the project.

I subsequently e-mailed all students who had indicated their willingness to participate to thank them for their interest and to arrange a time for interview. This e-mail also contained a copy of the research information sheet and consent form to ensure participants had the chance to see these in advance of the interview. I followed up non-responders once by e-mail. The initial substantial response rate allowed for subsequent drop-out yet for a suitably sized pool of interview participants to be retained. The final number of participants was 44. This comprised 27 students from year three and 17 students from year four (see Table 4.1).

Following interview I e-mailed all participants to thank them for taking part. I also informed them that, should they be willing, I would like to interview them again the following year. The study did not depend upon conducting longitudinal interviews but, as my study involved students’ experience of the

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<sup>20</sup> The total student number was 340 (180 in year 3; 160 in year 4).

2+2 course, I was interested to understand from all students' perspectives how the situation might have progressed since the beginning of the third year. For these second interviews, participants were e-mailed to seek their willingness to be re-interviewed and, if they were, a mutually convenient time was set. Fourteen students were re-interviewed in their fourth year (2009-10 session). I followed up non-responders once.

#### ***4.6.2 Pilot Study Interviews***

Before embarking upon the main study I conducted a pilot study in the form of two series of interviews with 17 students from the first cohort (2007-08 session) to experience the 2+2 course. Three of these students subsequently participated in the main study.

The first of these were with 5 students from the Malaysia Campus who were working in community pharmacies as part of their UK pharmacy work experience before starting the third year of the course. These students, working in local pharmacies (unlike the rest of the cohort, who were further afield), were invited for interview during their 8 week placement and interviews were held at a café at the university campus in order to facilitate relaxed discussion. These interviews were unstructured, and based around main areas of: experience of working in the pharmacy; comparison between pharmacy in Malaysia and the UK; settling into life in the UK; and future hopes and plans. They were done to enable me to gain a sense of how the students were adjusting to life in the UK and their impressions of UK community pharmacy. It also provided a chance for them to ask me questions about the pharmacy course and university.

The second series of pilot interviews were held in the School of Pharmacy with students from both university campuses who were in the third year of the degree. Similarly to the procedure for the main study described above, I recruited 12 students at the start of one of my lectures with the third years, when I briefly explained my interest in the success of the 2+2 course and asked for interview volunteers. During the previous academic year I had spent some time teaching at the Malaysia Campus and took the chance to observe and talk informally with students and staff about the course. Students who had been in Malaysia therefore knew of me and my interest and reason for the research. The sample comprised 5 Malaysia Campus students and 7 UK campus students, which included the two mobility students who had spent their second year at the campus in Malaysia as a study abroad year. Interviews were held in October 2007, soon after the start of term, and again in March 2008, when students had some months' experience of the third year of the course and of each other. The focus of these interviews was on motivations, hopes and expectations of university; experiences of teaching and learning; and experiences of or friendships with other students, both within and outside the School. The interview question guides are shown in Appendix 4.

This process allowed me to 'practise' interviewing and subsequently to review and consider my own performance. By the time of the second round of interviews within the pilot and, particularly the later of these, my thinking had moved on, my confidence and ability in interviewing had progressed and I was now less cautious or reticent in addressing what I had felt earlier to be sensitive issues surrounding culture and intercultural relationships.

Conducting the pilot interviews showed that the questions and themes arising from the data did not address the research questions particularly well and, as a result, helped to define the choice I had to make at this point about the direction and focus of my study. I thus began to change the emphasis of my work from the experience of the 2+2 course to the intercultural experiences of students more generally. I used this initial data to inform my thinking and develop my interview strategy for the main study.

Data from the pilot study interviews was not included in the data analysis. However, two of the Malaysia Campus students who took part in the pilot and also went on to be part of the main study have been used as individual case examples in Chapter 6. Pilot interview data was therefore used to inform the picture and understanding of these individuals.

#### ***4.6.3 Main Study Interviews***

As I examined data from the pilot interviews and considered them in the light of the literature and further thinking, the focus of my research shifted towards exploring the extent to which students were cosmopolitan and intercultural. I started to think about the potential for applying these ideas in research and was directed to the 'capability approach' and how it might provide a means of conceptualising and evaluating individual interculturality. The subsequent series of 42 interviews, therefore, not only aimed to discover how students' experiences might have changed as they progressed throughout the course, but also to focus on the intercultural nature of their experiences and the extent to which they had shaped their personal and professional outlook. The interview guides, shown in Appendix 1, were informed by findings from the literature, from theories of cosmopolitanism and intercultural learning and from my own research questions – themselves informed by reading and thinking about internationalisation and intercultural learning in higher education. At this stage I had not looked at capabilities in depth nor considered the approach as a tool for examination of the data. My interviewing was therefore not conducted from a capability perspective.

For the main study I interviewed 44 students in years three and four of the MPharm. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show the number of students participating at each stage.



Table 4.1 Number of Participants by Year and Group

Number of students by year	UK students	EU students (UK campus)	International students (UK campus)	Malaysia Campus students	Total number of students
08-09 (Year 3)	10	0	4	13	<b>27</b>
08-09 (Year 4)	5	1	2	9	<b>17</b>
Total number of first round students	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44</b>

Table 4.2 Number of Students Interviewed Twice

Number of students by student group	UK students	EU students (UK campus)	International students (UK campus)	Malaysia Campus students	Total number interviewed in both years 3 and 4
Total number of students 09-10 (Year 4)	7	0	3	4	<b>14</b>

Table 4.3 shows the number of interviews at each stage. In the 2008-09 session some students chose to be interviewed in pairs or even trios, rather than individually, hence the difference in number of students and interviews held. All 14 students who were interviewed again the following year were interviewed individually.

My intention was to recruit as wide a spectrum of students as possible, including home, international and specifically 2 +2 course Malaysia Campus students. A disproportionately high number of Malaysia Campus students volunteered for the project, particularly in year three 08-09 – yet only 4 of this group of 13 students agreed to a second interview. Reasons for the disproportionate representation of students from the different groups might include a sense of obligation to participate, particular interest in my topic, especially following my prior involvement with the students at the Malaysia Campus, or a lack of interest in the project or participation *per se*.

Table 4.3 Number of Interviews by Year and Group

Number of interviews by student group	UK students	EU students (UK campus)	International students (UK campus)	Malaysia Campus	Total number by year of study
08-09 (Year 3)	6	0	4	9	<b>19</b>
08-09 (Year 4)	4	1 <sup>21</sup>	2 <sup>22</sup>	5	<b>9</b>
Total number of first round interviews	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>
09-10 (Year 4)	7	0	3	4	<b>14</b>
Total number of second round interviews	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>
Total number of interviews	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>42</b>

I have used the following labelling conventions when reporting quotes in the empirical chapters 5 and 7 to indicate the student group and year (of study) of the interview:

- UK student: UK
- EU or international student at the UK campus: Int (UK)
- Malaysia Campus student: MC
- International student at the Malaysia Campus: Int (MC)
  
- Interview in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study: III
- Interview in 4th year of study: IV

#### 4.7 Ethical Considerations

Some specific considerations were necessary due to my privileged position within the School and the potential effect of my involvement in research with pharmacy students as participants. As described below, in recruitment of volunteer participants I made it clear that participation was entirely voluntary and would have no bearing upon marks awarded during the degree. This and other details were stated in an information sheet (Appendix 3) which was distributed prior to students agreeing to participate. Details included the aim of the study, details of participation in the interview (expected length of time,

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<sup>21</sup> These was a joint interview with a UK student, hence included in UK and EU student interviews columns. Totals do not therefore appear to add up.

<sup>22</sup> These were joint interviews with UK students, hence included in UK and international student interviews columns. Totals do not therefore appear to add up.

audio-recorded, ability to stop or withdraw), a confidentiality statement and contact details.

When students attended for interview I explained the process to them and asked them to sign a consent form (Appendix 5) indicating their agreement to participate. Students were guaranteed confidentiality and, protecting their identities in accounts of conversations in the thesis, I have identified individual students by the use of pseudonyms<sup>23</sup>. The audio-recordings, captured using a digital recorder, were stored on a computer with security password and automatic back-up system. Individual recordings are entitled with the pseudonyms. Paper copies of data were likewise anonymised and stored in a lockable cabinet. Transcripts are as faithful to the words spoken as possible. Some students disclosed views about some of my colleagues during interviews and, accordingly, their names are omitted from transcripts.

My role or position as interviewer, whether intended or perceived, had to be considered. Due to the types of questions and areas covered in interviews there were times when students used me as a means through which comments and suggestions about the course could be made to the School. At other times I became adviser as a pharmacist about their chosen career or as a sounding board when they had encountered difficulties or disappointment during their pharmacy work experience. I somehow had to balance the needs of the research against the needs of the student. I was also acutely aware of provoking feelings in students about their situations and experiences which might not otherwise have been aroused. It was clear that through discussions some students were moved to take a reflective stance on the good or not so good opportunities and experiences they had had. As an experienced tutor within the School of Pharmacy I was able to deal appropriately with any difficulties that could have arisen because of this. This was necessary only once, when a student was moved to tears when recounting her move to the UK for her sixth form study.

Attention was paid to the British Education Research Association Guidelines (British Educational Research Association) and to those of the School of Education at University X. This took into account factors such as voluntary, informed consent for participation and security and anonymity of data. Consideration and completion of a statement of research ethics was done, in accordance with the requirements. This was submitted in September 2008 and approval granted in October 2008. Being a member of staff in the School in which the study took place meant that there were no problems in gaining

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<sup>23</sup> I used the following conventions for pseudonyms:

- UK student: Name begins with S
- EU or international student at the UK campus: Name begins with J
- Malaysian students at the Malaysia Campus: Double name
- International student at the Malaysia Campus: Name begins with K

access to students for interview, however approval from the Head of the School of Pharmacy was also sought and was granted.

#### **4.8 Limitations of the Research**

This study examined the experiences of pharmacy students through usually one or two interviews during the second half of their degree course. The UK-based home and international students had therefore had some years together in the School of Pharmacy, unlike the 2+2 course students who, although they had studied a UK-based course and had known the mobility students in Malaysia, were relatively new to the UK during their third year interviews. It might be that, had I interviewed UK-based students earlier in the course, or the 2+2 students had been in the UK for longer, such stark differences in opinions about intercultural friendships (particularly between UK and international students) between the different campus cohorts would have been less prevalent. Similarly, had I been able to interview more (particularly Malaysia Campus) students longitudinally, in both third and fourth years, a different picture might have emerged. These considerations might represent a flaw in the research design, but also suggest areas for further study.

I am aware that I have risked creating false divisions between home, international and Malaysia Campus students in the way in which I have analysed and presented the data by student group. There is complexity and heterogeneity in all cultures and populations and I do not wish to imply intra-cultural homogeneity by presenting some of the data in this way. However, because my study concerns intercultural interactions, some comparisons and contrasts are inevitable and necessary. Also, group interviews were primarily with either home or international students, on the basis of students' choice; mixed groups might have produced some different discussions and perspectives with respect to intercultural issues.

It must be acknowledged that international students' relative linguistic competence is a factor in the acquisition of intercultural capability. Although this was not explored in interviews and was not overtly raised by a large number of students, it was clear that it nevertheless has a bearing upon ease of academic understanding, forming of relationships and mutual working, particularly when set aside UK students' capacity to be patient and accommodating (a functioning of *Social Relations and Participation*).

During data analysis it became apparent that some knowledge of students' biographical data might have been useful when considering factors that contribute to the possession and development of intercultural capability. However, as I had not envisaged analysing the data with respect to capability when constructing the interview guides, questions were not asked about this. Also, the students I interviewed self-selected to take part in the study. Students who volunteered might, for example, have been less ethnocentric or more interested in intercultural issues than the student population as a whole.

#### **4.9 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

As a researcher I sought to adhere as closely as possible to the students' perspectives and tried not to impose explanations or meanings as seen through my personal lens (Bassey 1999; Cohen et al. 2007; Lincoln and Guba 1985; Mason 2002a; Miles and Huberman 1994b; Tierney and Dilley 2002) Throughout the process I tried to remain aware of my own ethnocentricity, views and assumptions and the effect which they could have upon my interpretation of the data. For example I tried not to necessarily take what students said to me without question, or tried to consider their situations from mine or others' perspectives.

As a means of increasing the trustworthiness and credibility of the data I used a process of triangulation, which involves a comparison of information from different sources. I gathered and compared data from different students; interviews were held, not only at the same point in the course but, for some, second interviews allowed me to look at the extent to which data might change or remain constant with time; a sample of data (10 interviews) was coded twice from scratch; and I used both pooled and individual student data to try and get a sense of the situation from different angles.

In terms of the level of analysis of data there is a tension between maintaining a sense of the holism of the data against the tendency for analysis to fragment the data, losing this sense of the whole picture. Whole stories are important to illustrate a more general picture; they help to illuminate and deepen understanding of situations, to identify patterns, themes and categories. Use of pooled data enhances the potential relevance or applicability of findings to other similar settings (Cohen et al. 2007; Miles and Huberman 1994a). However it risks losing the sense of the individual, the data can become decontextualised and important issues can be lost or omitted (Cohen et al. 2007). Presenting data by individual, through illustrating a story of the person, enables more in-depth analysis of how individual themes might play out within the whole population. It helps to suggest explanations for some of the findings within the picture as constructed by analysis of the pooled data.

In my study, having established that a spectrum of intercultural capability existed across the student population, analysis of individual data proved valuable as a means of identifying and illustrating some of the factors which affected the extent to which individual students were more or less able to develop and to display intercultural capability. Chapter 5 uses pooled data across the whole set to illustrate the extent and experience of intercultural capability. The data was analysed against my capability set: experiences and opinions revealed by students were matched against the intercultural capabilities, in order to categorise the level and extent of capability across the cohort (see Table 5.1, p83). Having done this, I selected four student cases for more detailed study in the basis of their level of capability. As described in Chapter 6, I selected two British students and two 2+2 course Malaysian students – one of each from either end of the range. This analysis, using

individual student data, specifically used extreme cases in order to investigate factors which might have caused such different outcomes in students studying on the same course. Extreme cases accentuate differences and so are employed to exemplify distinctive characteristics and allow comparisons to be made (Archer 2007; Mason 2002a). Consistently high or low scorers help to identify factors which can cause such variability, particularly when there are common, constant factors (Miles and Huberman 1994a) – in this case, the MPharm course.

#### *4.9.1 Stages of Analysis*

The first stage of my data analysis was to listen to the audio-recordings of the interviews in order to gather a sense of the whole (Alexiadou 2001; Hycner 1985). I wanted a sense of the person behind the words. Whilst listening I noted down my main impressions from the interview, described the person as they seemed and the main points arising from the interview. I tried to understand their intent and sense of meaning, as evidenced by the way things were spoken or, indeed, not spoken (Hycner 1985).

The second stage was to identify broad themes, which was initially done with a small number of interviews. Reading off hard copies, I assigned codes to text which were of relevance to my research questions or which stood out as meaningful (Alexiadou 2001; Hycner 1985; Miles and Huberman 1994a). These codes were subsequently re-assigned from scratch by me before being clustered into broad themes (Alexiadou 2001; Hycner 1985; Miles and Huberman 1994a). I coded 10 interviews ‘by hand’, by which time no further themes were emerging. These main themes which emerged from the data are shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Emergent themes from Interview Data

Pharmacy Course
Intercultural Interactions
Group Work
Friendships and Social Life
Expectations and Reality of University
Changing as a Person
Change in Teaching and Learning
Being a Pharmacist
Nationality and Culture

The third stage involved assigning the data from all the interviews by theme. This was done using NVivo software, which considerably eased the coding process, provided a relatively easy means of displaying interview transcripts and themes and aided comparisons between individuals and groups.

My intention was to analyse and describe the data based on a number of these themes. However it was around this time of starting to analyse the data that I

was becoming interested in and aware of how the capability approach, which I have described in the previous chapter, seemed to connect with my research concerns and interests. My aim through the interview process was to discover the extent to which and how students were, or were not, developing interculturality, and the capability approach seemed to provide an interesting and useful way of thinking about this. Unlike some other measures used to determine intercultural competence, this approach was more holistic, focussed on individuals rather than competence outcomes. It seemed to be a way to envisage and operationalise the relatively abstract ideas of cosmopolitanism within higher education.

Drawing upon capability theory and upon the work of others who have constructed capabilities lists, particularly for higher education, I decided to construct a capability set for being intercultural (see previous chapter). The context of my study is a novel application of capabilities and I will now move on to describe the process of how I constructed the set. In the thesis as a whole I will explore and demonstrate the extent to which such a framework might provide a normative tool to describe the essential elements of being interculturality capable and the conditions which appear to support an individual to flourish interculturality.

#### ***4.9.2 Development of the Capability Set***

The development of the framework was iterative, drawing on capability theory, literature on intercultural learning and upon my empirical data, as now described.

After completion of the data gathering and interview transcription I drew up a list of attributes which I considered encompassed the principles of what it is to be cosmopolitan and intercultural. The list-making process was informed by reading on cosmopolitanism and intercultural education; my thoughts and impressions from having examined the interview data and inevitably coloured by my own perspectives (both initial and undoubtedly influenced by my study) on what I consider of value in a student, pharmacist and individual. I considered firstly the more behavioural and visible aspects of what students are able to be or do – for example, the capability to form relationships, to respect, or to participate. It was important to consider functioning as well as capability, so not only did I include the being and doing, but also having the freedom to be or do – for example to be respected, to be able to participate. I then considered the more intellectual and latent aspects of being intercultural - for example, the capability to question beliefs, to seek reasons or to seek to learn from others. At this stage these attributes were not grouped into overarching capabilities. This initial list is shown in Appendix 6.

Secondly I constructed a group of overarching capabilities to describe cosmopolitan and intercultural principles, informed by considering the potential relevance of others' lists of capabilities in this situation and their rationale for their choice. (Flores-Crespo 2007; McLean and Walker 2012;

Nussbaum 2000; Terzi 2007a; Walker 2006; Walker et al. 2009; Walker et al. 2008). Whilst these capabilities are similar to some of those used to describe higher and professional education, I have chosen and adapted those that seem most relevant to intercultural capability.

The third stage was to assign the intercultural attributes (Appendix 6) to the capabilities in order to test whether they were viable at this stage. I needed to know whether the single attributes fitted into the overarching capability set. As a result of this process I drafted an initial draft capability set for being intercultural (see Table 4.5) which consists of the overarching capability framework and associated detail.

Table 4.5 Draft Capability Set for Being Intercultural

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Practical Reason	Able to make life choices based on informed, critical, ethically-sound, reflective, independent thought and reason.
Social Relations and Participation	Able to form social and working relationships with others. Able to work with others for learning, working, discussion, problem-solving and presentation. Willing to interact outside of comfort zone. Able/willing to promote dialogue. Able and allowing others to be included and to participate. Using inter-cultural communication to communicate, listen and question and allowing others to do the same.
Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Having respect for and showing respect to others. Being treated with respect. Recognising a responsibility to others. Having a voice and allowing others their voice. Recognising the value of other's contributions; having the value of one's contributions acknowledged. Accepting difference. Respecting alternative points of view.
Mind and Imagination	Seeking to understand others, their worlds and situations. Open-mindedness. Open to different perspectives and points of view. Willing to engage in moral and ethical debate. Able to accepting disagreement. Willing to explore disagreement. Able to imagine and appreciate one's local and wider connectivities.
Enquiry and Reflection	Seeking to learn from others, about others, their worlds and situations. Not assuming one's own way is necessarily correct or best. Able to think about one's own situation, values, beliefs, received knowledge, practices and behaviours in the light of those of others.



The detail within the capabilities represents the capability (freedom) as well as the functioning. So, for example, being ‘able to interact outside of comfort zone’ describes being ‘able’ as meaning both the personal capability (ability) to do or desire this as well as being allowed to function in this way. It reflects the combined capability (Nussbaum 2000), of both internal and external components.

The final step was to test the set with reference to the data in order to assess its usefulness and validity. To do this I examined the data with respect to the capabilities using the pooled data from the main themes of *Intercultural Interactions*, *Group Work* and *Friendships and Social Life*. Once I had established fit with these overarching capabilities I assigned the detail within the categories. This process made clear that capabilities, functioning and restricted functioning all had to be considered in building up the picture that I was seeing through the lens of capabilities. The interviews captured not only what participants said that they did or didn’t do, but also included expressions of views, sentiments and generalisations, which informed my judgement about their capabilities. This also provided information about their environment – a collection of accounts, views and values as explanations towards what was happening and why.

This exercise confirmed that the set did on the whole provide a good descriptor of capabilities for being intercultural. Some amendments were necessary, including condensing some of the detail and wording to make the framework less unwieldy and more ‘user-friendly’. I also removed one of the capabilities, as I describe below. The changes made in the light of my findings and thinking were:

*Practical Reason*: I removed the capability of *Practical Reason*. As discussed in the previous chapter, this is one of Martha Nussbaum’s basic capabilities upon which she places significant emphasis, and which features in capability sets for students in higher education (Flores-Crespo 2007; Nussbaum 2000; Terzi 2007a; Walker 2006). However in testing the framework it seemed much less specific and useful in relation to being intercultural and was more an overarching theme arising from the others.

*Social Relations and Participation*: Through listening to the students’ words I felt that ‘able/willing’ to interact was insufficient; something describing ‘desire to’ was important for those individuals who wanted and tried to make new friends. There was also a need to include an attribute that reflected individuals positively taking pleasure in intercultural relationships (and see ‘Valuing difference’ under *Enquiry and Reflection* below). I moved participation and inclusion into *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* below; a feature of relationships, participation is also encompassed within having respect for and from others.

*Respect, Dignity and Recognition:* Showing and receiving respect and recognition of a responsibility to others were hard to identify directly from the data, but were implicit from the words that students used and from looking at other capabilities which were present, and were therefore important to retain. Working with the concept of ‘accepting difference’ proved interesting and challenging, as I came to realise that there is something about *recognising* difference, which is not necessarily the same as *accepting* difference. I have therefore included this also. I see that ‘recognising difference’ can have positive or negative connotations, but in this context I intend it to be interpreted as a positive process that implies awareness and sensitivity, and which precedes the acceptance of difference in an active sense.

*Mind and Imagination:* No changes were needed for this capability, apart from more succinct wording.

*Enquiry and Reflection:* In the areas covered within this capability I was again struck by the concept of ‘difference’ that was evident from student accounts. In *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* above I found the need to include the notion of recognising difference, whereas here I see that there is something about enjoying or being interested in the fact that differences exist and taking pleasure from that. This value and enjoyment was discussed in the context of both social interactions and learning about each other. I have therefore included *valuing and enjoying* difference within this capability.

Amendments to the initial framework (Table 4.5) in line with these findings and thoughts have produced what has become my working capability set for analysis of my data. This is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Final Capability Set for Being Intercultural

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Social relations and participation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Able to form social and working relationships with others.</li> <li>2. Able / willing to interact outside of comfort zone. Desire to interact outside of comfort zone.</li> <li>3. Able / willing to use intercultural communication to promote dialogue.</li> </ol>
Respect, dignity and recognition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Having and showing respect for others; being treated with respect.</li> <li>2. Recognising, accepting and respecting difference.</li> <li>3. Recognising a responsibility to others.</li> <li>4. Allowing and valuing inclusion and contributions of others; being included and having one's contributions valued.</li> <li>5. Having a voice and allowing others their voice</li> </ol>
Mind and imagination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seeking to understand others, their worlds and situations.</li> <li>2. Able to imagine and appreciate one's local and wider connectivities.</li> <li>3. Open-mindedness</li> <li>4. Willing to engage in moral and ethical debate; to explore disagreement; to accept disagreement</li> </ol>
Enquiry and reflection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seeking to learn from others, about others, their worlds and situations.</li> <li>2. Valuing and enjoying difference</li> <li>3. Able to think about one's own situation, values, beliefs, received knowledge, practices and behaviours in the light of those of others.</li> </ol>

#### ***4.9.3 Criteria used in assessing Intercultural Capability***

In analysis of the data against the capability set I judged what I considered each student's capability to be on a scale of low to high. This was done by looking for evidence, or lack of evidence, for capability and functioning within the interview dialogue. For each student it involved looking for specific comments as well as the overall balance of behaviours and sentiments described. By way of illustration I have provided some examples of students at different levels of the capability and the types of evidence used in their categorisation.

Sandra (High for all capabilities):

- **Social Relations and Participation:** *[Friends] Well there are quite a few Malaysians; Belgium, Dutch and Irish – quite a mix. And Spanish as well.*
- **Respect, Dignity and Recognition:** *There is no barrier in terms of, oh well different people have different religions, different times of going to church or the synagogue or whatnot. It doesn't [cause a problem]. Everyone's like, 'Oh well I can't come then because I'm going to wherever' and it's 'Oh right, oh well we'll do something else tomorrow'.*
- **Mind and Imagination:** *Yes because like before you always see it from a narrow view but, in this situation, you can just open it up and see it from many, many different aspects.*
- **Enquiry and Reflection:** *That [having friends of different nationality] to me is more of an interest than a divide because we are all so different – even within your own country. But when you go further afield it's even better. I think it's great and you get to learn so much more because, OK people in the UK are different nationalities and you can learn from them, but when you are with people from abroad as well you can learn so much more about people, different ways of life, different ways of life and everything.*

James (Medium for all capabilities)

- **Social Relations and Participation:** *Me and some of my Hong Kong friends think what's the point of not mixing with the Malaysians? They are pharmacists; they are colleagues so why not just mix friends? I am quite used to the system of mixing with people from different cultures. I still interact with other nationalities but it's just not as frequent or not as close. Not really for the British; I've no idea why. Maybe I don't drink much. I don't drink much and I don't watch football - this just draws me away from the British because I don't do these two stuff.*
- **Respect, Dignity and Recognition:** *Country's not a thing; it cannot be a barrier. It's just different cultures, but if you don't know the culture how can you assume the culture's different from yours – [it's] definitely going to be different. But without discriminating or anything why don't you just try to compromise, understand, before you discriminate [against] the culture.*
- **Mind and Imagination:** *I think throughout my three years I feel more comfortable and convenient with working with someone that I don't really know. So I am more open-minded to people's opinions and the way of their thinking.*
- **Enquiry and Reflection:** *Before you accept other people's mindset you have to open your [mind] otherwise you don't give them a chance. You dictate and say no, no, no. So you have to just open your [mind] and get people's minds in*

*there. And then you think about it and then you say 'yes' or 'no' or discuss it the way it is.*

Wee Ting (Low for all capabilities)

- *Social Relations and Participation: I think some people do really, can speak very well and are very good in making friends, but I don't do very well in that.*
- *Most of the time I'm staying at home, watching drama.*
  
- *Respect, Dignity and Recognition: All three of them [UK students] did the analysis together and the two of us Malaysians were just standing watching them doing. So two of us were outside and looking at them doing the work.*
  
- *Over here I'm usually quiet. Because I try to give my thoughts and sometimes they don't really care about me so I tend to be quiet.*
  
- *Mind and Imagination / Enquiry and Reflection: Any conversation I tried to have about learning in a broad sense or changes perceived in oneself was discussed primarily in terms of academic learning.*

The example interview transcript shown in Appendix 2 illustrates a student (Wen Peng) who was judged H,M,M,M respectively across the four capabilities.

The capability set will be used as a lens through which to examine and describe the findings from my data. I will explore its application in being able to describe the extent to which individuals display intercultural capability, to suggest some of the reasons for which individuals appear to be more or less interculturally capable and to illustrate how pedagogy might have a role in influencing opportunities for the development of intercultural capability.

## Chapter 5

### A Spectrum of Intercultural Capability

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the first of three which explore the findings from the data through the lens of capability, to evaluate the extent to which pharmacy students were able, through their university study, to develop a more cosmopolitan self. The chapter seeks to portray the spectrum of intercultural capabilities amongst the students in my study, illustrated by use of the capability set discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. It describes the students' opportunities for and experiences of intercultural interactions as evidenced through the interviews, framed in terms of their intercultural capabilities.

Using pooled student data<sup>24</sup> I examined the major themes from the interviews (Expectations and reality of university; Friendships and social life; Group work; Intercultural interactions; Nationality and culture) against each of the capabilities. I looked and listened for evidence of capability (or lack of capability) and functioning in students' accounts, by seeking verbal expression about the extent and types of their experiences with each other; opportunities for intercultural exploration taken or missed; and their thoughts and feelings about this. Having no means of observing or confirming actual functioning, I took students' words and reported functioning as a proxy for possessing a capability. I also sought examples of restricted functioning, whereby capabilities might have been present, but their expression inhibited. I therefore judged the possession (or not) of capability based on students' accounts of their experiences, thoughts and opinions.

The chapter is organised into four main sections based on the four main capabilities within the set: *Social Relations and Participation*; *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*; *Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection*. Although each capability is essentially independent of the others, there is inevitably and necessarily some degree of linkage and overlap. Within each section I connect findings from the data with the literature which addresses students' intercultural experiences of higher education and with theories of cosmopolitanism and intercultural education.

Analysis of the data against the capability set revealed a range of intercultural capabilities. At one extreme were students who had benefitted greatly from the internationalised higher education environment, through being able to capitalise on the opportunities offered, discovering enjoyment and self-development through their intercultural encounters. At the other extreme was a picture of missed opportunity; students who, for a variety of reasons, had been unable to take similar advantage to any great extent, constrained by circumstances largely out of their control, by the actions of others, or by their

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<sup>24</sup> Data from 42 interviews with 44 students, 14 of whom were interviewed twice.

own attitudes. In between these extremes, students reported an array of experiences and gave evidence for varying degrees of capability, agency and self-development.

Using the capability set I judged what I considered each student's capability to be on a scale of low to high. This was done by looking for evidence, or lack of evidence, for capability and functioning within the interview dialogue. Table 5.1 illustrates the categorisation<sup>25</sup> and shows clearly that, whilst a range of capabilities existed across the student group, some individuals tended to score relatively high or low across most or all capabilities. A student who was highly capable in one area tended also to have high capability in others. The same was true for low capability. At the start of each of the chapter sections on the four capabilities I have summarised the table to show the range for that capability.

Table 5.1 Spectrum of Intercultural Capabilities Mapped Against the Capability Set

Students by group	Social Relations and Participation	Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Mind and Imagination	Enquiry and Reflection
<b>UK</b>				
Soraya	H	H	H	H
Sadie	M	H	M	M
Sarah	H	H	H	H
Samantha	L	L	L	L
Sophie	L	L	L	L
Sandra	M	L	M	M
Suzanne	L	M	L	L
Sabine	L	L	L	L
Susan	M	M	M	M
Serena	M	M	M	H
Simon	M	M	M	L
Sam	M	L	M	L
Shaun	L	L	M	M
Suraj	M	M	M	M
Sahen	M	H	M	M
<b>International (not MC)</b>				
Jeanette	M	M	M	M
Jennie	M	M	H	M
Julia	H	M	H	M

<sup>25</sup> I have indicated students' capabilities against their quotations by using L (low), M (medium) or H (high) for the capability being illustrated.

Jane	H	M	H	H
Jacqui	M	H	H	M
James	M	M	M	M
Jauhar	M	H	M	M
<b>Malaysia Campus</b>				
<i>1<sup>st</sup> cohort (year 4 only)</i>				
Wee Ting	L	L	L	L
Kayla	H	M	M	M
Ken Hooi	M	M	H	M
Wei Sin	L	L	L	L
Sin Lee	L	L	L	M
Huey Yi	L	L	M	L
Yi Wen	L	L	M	L
Kai Yee	L	L	L	L
Pei Ann	H	M	M	M
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> cohort (year 3 &amp; 4)</i>				
Kimi	M	M	M	H
Sue Wen	M	M	M	M
Wen Peng	H	M	M	M
Kah Yeang	M	M	M	M
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> cohort (year 3 only)</i>				
Chuan Ya	L	L	L	L
Myung Eun	L	L	L	L
Tien Li	L	L	M	M
Chia Yin	L	L	M	L
Siew Lan	L	L	M	L
Kalindi	M	M	M	M
Tien Tien	L	M	M	L
Chee Vui	L	L	L	L
Chung Jin	M	L	M	M
<b>Overall</b>	H 7 M 19 L 18	H 6 M 19 L 19	H 7 M 26 L 11	H 5 M 22 L 17



## 5.2 Intercultural Capability 1: Social Relations and Participation

The capability of *Social Relations and Participation* is summarised in the extract below from Table 4.6 'Final Capability Set for Being Intercultural' (Chapter 4 p81).

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Social relations and participation	1. Able to form social and working relationships with others. 2. Able / willing to interact outside of comfort zone. Desire to interact outside of comfort zone. 3. Able / willing to use intercultural communication to promote dialogue.

It encompasses the will and ability to interact with others; the ability to communicate and form relationships, whether socially or for work; and being prepared or able to step outside of one's natural comfort zone<sup>26</sup> in order to develop wider friendships. A desire to interact with others might be in fulfilment of a need for personal education and development of one's self or it might spring from a true cosmopolitan-based desire of understanding others in the interests of inclusivity and fairness. However, as we see below, stepping out of one's comfort zone in order to forge friendships more widely is not always an easy option.

Table 5.2 shows the range for the capability of *Social Relations and Participation*. The extent of capability varied, with a minority of students appearing highly capable. A large number of students exhibited low capability and / or functioning (including almost two-thirds of the Malaysia Campus students, some in whom were in their fourth year).

Table 5.2 Spectrum of Intercultural Capabilities: *Social Relations and Participation*

Degree of Capability	Student Group			Overall
	UK (15)	Int (7)	MC (22)	
High	2	2	3 (yr 4)	7
Medium	8	5	4 (yr 4), 2 (yr3)	19
Low	5	0	6 (yr4), 7 (yr 3)	18

I have described this capability under three main sections. Firstly I discuss the positive aspects of how students formed their intercultural friendships. In contrast, the second section illustrates how and why intercultural relationships were not always formed successfully, and the differing reactions of students to

<sup>26</sup> Comfort zone describes a situation in which one feels at ease, safe or in control.

their relationships with others. The third highlights the important role of intercultural communication in the forming of relationships.

### ***5.2.1 Forming Relationships with Others***

The desire and ability to interact with and form relationships with others is a fundamental component of the capability for *Social Relations and Participation* and, as seen throughout this and subsequent chapters, it became apparent that this capability provides the initial foundation upon which development of other capabilities is often enabled. It is akin to Martha Nussbaum's capability of 'affiliation', which she considers as being particularly important as it 'organises and suffuses' other capabilities (Nussbaum 2000; 82).

Generally, student friendship networks are an essential part of making a successful transition into university life (Brooks 2007; Buote et al. 2007; Ramsay et al. 2007). All students told me about the friendships that they had made at university, which arose through different means, often quite early in the course, and generally through a shared activity or interest, such as living in hall together, participating in group work or via societies and religious groups. There was a good deal of overlap in the social and learning spheres of friendships, with many close friendships having arisen through the course. Group work<sup>27</sup> had been the source of many friendships and provided opportunities to get to know other pharmacy students. In the third year it facilitated interactions between students from the two campuses and provided a chance for Malaysia Campus students to ask general questions about life in the UK. Within the course the students experienced general friendliness and had made different types and depths of friendships. Nearly all students reported having friends of different nationalities and backgrounds, varying from friendly acquaintances to close friendships.

In initial discussions about expectations and hopes from university, the majority of students, across all groups, cited making new friends as one of their main desires. However it was apparent that, in general, home and international students had broadly different priorities and expectations: international students in the main desired and expected to make friends with students from other countries and cultures than their own, whereas this had possibly not occurred to most UK students. That local students show little inclination to consider issues of diversity, have experienced interactions with culturally-diverse peers and are indifferent to potential benefits of intercultural contact is found in a number of studies (Harrison and Peacock 2010a; UNITE/UKCOSA 2006; Volet and Ang 1998). Although the majority of UK students in my study appeared to be less ethnocentrically focussed than these studies would suggest, it must be borne in mind that I had a self-selecting group of students, who were perhaps more likely to be interested in

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<sup>27</sup> Group work will pertain more to some disciplines than others. There is a considerable amount of group work in pharmacy, for example laboratory classes, workshop discussions and preparation of presentations.

interculturality than the cohort as a whole. For example Sarah, by her words below, indicated an open-minded, cosmopolitan attitude, seeing humanity in others and the value of learning from them:

*I'm interested in not being narrow-minded and you've got nothing to lose by talking to different people and finding out different information because you never know what you might learn. We're all human at the end of the day.*  
(Sarah, UK, IV, H, 21.01.10)<sup>28</sup>

*And it's been quite nice on the pharmacy course which is so multicultural - to meet people from different backgrounds. I think it's good that there is a mixture of people. I wouldn't want the whole year to be white.*  
(Sadie, UK, IV, M, 01.02.10)

Some UK students had friends from different countries, either from the pharmacy course or through other activities:

*Since starting Jiu Jitsu it [international friendship circle] has opened up a bit because there are a couple of Germans and Hungarian and Slovakian who I will go out with socially, so it's broadened since then.*  
(Sandra, UK, IV, M, 09.02.10)

*Well there are quite a few Malaysians; Belgium, Dutch and Irish – quite a mix. And Spanish as well.*  
(Sarah, UK, IV, H, 21.01.10)

*Outside of the course whether it's through PharmSoc or whatever we've had little things here and there, such as international evenings and we've had people from Malaysia round for dinner at our place; [name] cooked a Chinese meal.*  
(Suraj, UK, IV, M, 08.12.08)

Intercultural friendship formation appears to be an important factor in the desired educational experience of international students (Caruana and Spurling 2007; Chalmers and Volet 1997; Koehne 2006; Mazzarol and Soutar 2002; UKCOSA 2004; Ward 2001). The international students in my study were not different and a large majority wanted to make friends outside of their usual social or cultural group. Some specifically talked about the satisfaction that came through having achieved that.

*I've made so many new friends. What I really wanted to do when I began this course was I wanted to make sure that I made more friends with my local classmates rather than stick to my Malaysian group and I have done that so I'm really happy.*  
(Kayla, Int (MC), IV, H, 01.12.08)

*My first intention was to meet people from other places, because I don't want to be in British culture and speaking my own language as well – there's kind of like no point in doing that.*  
(Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)

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<sup>28</sup> (Sarah, UK, IV, H, 21.01.10) = Pseudonym, UK student, interviewed in year 4, level of capability (high), date of interview

A strong theme from my study was that a majority of international students, including from Malaysia Campus, had formed valuable intercultural friendships. Many of these were good friendships, not just friendly acquaintances.

*I've got a Burmese friend and a Punjabi friend, a Tamil and some Malay friends, and others who are Chinese group. (Kalindi, MC, III, M, 14.03.09)*

*I have an Indian friend, Korean and then some from the Caribbean and some, like, British friends and yeah, some of them are Asian as well. My closest friend is from Hong Kong. Another good friend is from Vietnam. I met her on my first day of introductions. And then people outside because I'm a Christian and I go to church – the English church – and so I'm exposed to a lot of different people –and I also joined the study group, the fellowship thing and I have quite a good bonding with people there. (Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)*

*A few Vietnamese students, Hong Kong students and a few British students from the Magic Society and a few British students from the pharmacy course. (Wen Peng, MC, IV, H, 08.03.10)*

*All the people I am living with this year are all doing Masters and they are doing different things. One's a Greek; one's a Muslim and the other one's from Thailand. (Jauhar, Int (UK), IV, M, 08.12.08)*

However, as the quotations indicate, these friendships were largely with international students from other countries and not with British students (and in particular not with white British students). The friendships were valued, provided enjoyment and security and were a source of exploration into the lives of others, their countries and cultures. It was evident that those students who had the desire to make intercultural friendships had also discovered the opportunity for their functioning. This is important given that the focus of much of the literature on cross-cultural friendships in higher education is the apparent disadvantaged situation of many international students because of a relative lack of interaction with the host culture (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Grey 2002; Mullins et al. 1995; O'Donoghue 1996; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward 2001). Yet we can see that through their intercultural friendships with students from countries both other than their own and other than the UK, students were developing their intercultural competence and a more cosmopolitan identity. Work by Montgomery and McDowell (2009) similarly challenges the negative portrayal of international student friendship groups. It could be viewed that the host students are actually the ones in a position of greater disadvantage, if it is they who are not having or taking the opportunities for developing intercultural relationships – in addition to not experiencing life within a different culture.

Some Malaysia Campus students described the wider course friendships they had made over time and, through this, the social life that they experienced.

This was raised by fourth year Malaysia Campus students from two of the five first cohort interviews and by students in all four second cohort interviews. The other Malaysia Campus students described more limited friendships, particularly in range of nationality, although admitted that some of their cohort had been able to mix to a greater extent. From the disappointment at the lack of mixing evident in some third year interviews, I heard how friendships had now developed and that life was more ‘fun’.

*From year three to year four we’ve lost that stickiness as a cohort and we’re more likely to engage with the rest of the students and some of us have been getting along well with other students within the course. You can see them hanging out together in class and they have lunch and go shopping together*  
(Wen Peng, MC, IV, H, 08.03.10)

Four UK campus students likewise noticed more integration, for example:

*In the pharmacy class though I think there has been a huge, huge improvement. Maybe it was harder because everybody was new, but group work helped - and they are probably more confident having been in this country now for over a year.*  
(Soraya, UK, IV, H, 04.02.10)

The Malaysia Campus students appeared to have expanded their functioning of *Social Relations and Participation* as they became more able to exert their agency and interact outside of their comfort zone. This concurs with other work indicating a growth in international students’ academic and intercultural confidence with time as they become more prepared and able to interact outside of co-national groups (Coles and Swami 2012; Schweisfurth and Gu 2009). We can assume that there was a corresponding capability development amongst those students with whom the friendships were formed.

As regards facilitating friendships between students from the two campuses, some of the mobility students (that is, UK campus-based students who had spent some or all of their second year at the Malaysia Campus) acted as ‘bridge-builders’. In the first cohort, there were only three mobility students within a relatively close-knit group of 40 at Malaysia Campus. Strong friendships were formed and these few students remained in reasonably close contact with the Malaysia Campus students throughout the rest of the course in the UK. They helped to convert the capability for *Social Relations and Participation* into functioning.

*It’s mainly our little group [of UK students] and then the Malaysians who I would be closer to. My friends are mostly British and Malaysian.*  
(Serena, UK, IV, M, 28.04.09)

Intercultural capability had accrued for the mobility students, as well as for their Malaysia Campus friends, through the way in which they responded to the opportunities for the formation and maintenance of intercultural friendships.

Of the second cohort of nine mobility students, the extent of friendship formation and subsequently remaining in close contact with students from the Malaysia Campus varied considerably. I heard from some of the Malaysia Campus students that the mobility students were people whom they could say 'hello' to in the UK, although it was often little more than that. However four Malaysia Campus students had continued their friendships with mobility students and, through this, widened their circle of friends within the UK. This is a good example of how students' capability and agency was affected by the capabilities of others, for the *Social Relations and Participation* functioning of these mobility students affected opportunity for capability development and functioning of the Malaysia Campus students. Three different Malaysia Campus students specifically noted that it was the British Asian mobility students (of whom there were three) who had developed these friendship groups with the Malaysia Campus students; another Malaysian girl remarked that it was the two Canadian Asian (rather than the white British girls) with whom they continued their friendship in the UK.

*They are actually the group of friends who actually brought us into the local students. So the mobility students played an important role. We helped them a lot back in Malaysia and so when we came here they helped us a lot as well.*

*(Sue Wen, MC, IV, M, 17.03.10)*

*I find it easier to talk to the Asian-born British, and those who did mobility in Malaysia were, like, the Indians and I sort of got to know their friends from them and we play football quite a lot.*

*(Chung Jin, MC, III, M, 17.02.09)*

This was confirmed by Sahen, a British Asian student, who had made friends with some students from Malaysia via his mobility student friend, through playing football together. It might be that students of mixed cultural heritage, like these British Asian students, tend to be more culturally sensitive and adept, hence more likely to engage in intercultural relationships (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Marginson 2009). Sahen in fact said:

*It's maybe because, although I'm from England, I've got an Asian background and I kind of appreciate different cultures and the fact that you've got to be tolerant.*

*(Sahen, UK, III, M, 06.02.09)*

Personal attitudes (such as those gained from experiences of growing up within a mixed cultural environment) affect the acquisition of capability (Nussbaum 2011). The potential influence of mixed culture on the possession of capability was also seen in Kayla, a Kenyan student from the Malaysia Campus, who had lived in three different countries and spoke six languages. As part of a conscious effort to widen her friendship group outside of her predominantly Malaysian group of friends, she devised strategies to interact and make friends with others. She had found ways to maximise her functioning of *Social Relations and Participation*.

*Because this year I wasn't sticking to the Malaysian group I would sit somewhere else and next to a local student and I would take the initiative to speak to them, or something random would come up, like an ice-breaker, and we would either exchange e-mail addresses or find that we had a common interest and then build upon that.* (Kayla, Int (MC), IV, H, 01.12.08)

Kayla told me how she felt that expanding her friendships had caused some friction between her and her housemates, who felt that she was less concerned with them now that she had her 'new friends'. Although this caused some upset for Kayla, she remained determined to continue to branch out. She began to discover that she wanted different things from her different friendships and started to see that although her 'old friends' were company, they had little in common. Perhaps the question remains of whether the expansion of Kayla's freedom in making the new friendships she desired was diminishing that of her housemate friends.

I found further evidence that forming cross-cultural friendships requires a delicate and difficult negotiation with oneself. For example, the three international students from Hong Kong I interviewed described a tendency for students from their country to be exclusive and said they did not want to be like that themselves. This suggested that they were atypical amongst their group – evidenced perhaps by the fact that they volunteered to participate in the study. Their friendship groups included a small number of close friends from their own country and students from different countries.

*For Hong Kong people their mind set is that they like to stick with a certain group of people. It's more society they don't easily allow people to come in or ask people to join. So it is fixed in the first place and it doesn't change much and whenever they go anywhere the group goes together and comes back together. Hardly anyone can join in. So my friends, we are a small group and we don't mix well with some of the other Hong Kong students because we don't like the system.* (James, Int (UK), III, M, 01.12.08)

*I was quite struggling at the first three months. Hong Kong people tend to do things together, have lunch together and even if they finish the lecture they will get all the people and then go to a canteen. And I didn't like that. I was more independent and I had more lifestyle and I wanted to get more people and that's why I think the second semester of the first year I tried to – not avoid them but, if they would ask you 'What time you go to lectures this morning then maybe we can walk together', I would say 'No, no, no. I may be late'. Because I wanted to sit with some other people at the lecture and know more people.* (Julia, Int (UK), III, H, 03.03.09)

This area of friendship development must have been personally challenging, being a balance between in some way rejecting those co-national students who were willing to be friends, yet relying on being able to form comfortable, sufficiently deep friendships with others in the early days of university life. These students were also challenging and rejecting what they described as

behavioural norms amongst their co-national group. In doing so, they were reliant on finding like-minded students from their own country in order to provide some stability and support as they forged wider friendships. Some students do take the risk of alienating their co-national friends in order to widen their social group (Montgomery 2010). Of course, being from the same country or culture doesn't mean that someone has the same attitudes or interests and, as some students declared, it is the person that matters in friendships rather than the nationality. We see in these students a potential for mis-match between their capability and functioning. They had to overcome difficulties and reject the probably easier option of remaining within a familiar group of friends in order to gain the freedom to function in a way they valued. Somewhat against the odds, these students had been able to enact their desire, willingness and ability to interact outside of their comfort zone and form relationships with others.

Seeking and making intercultural friendships would also have challenged the identity and sense of belonging of these students (Erichsen 2011), particularly for international students, who, having left the familiarity of their home country, were now taking a further step into others' worlds. However students who did engage with others could see the benefits to be gained:

*I think it takes a lot of confidence to actually walk up to someone who is not of your nationality and talk to them and interact with them, but I think it helps.*  
(Wen Peng, MC, III, H, 17.03.09)

It is evident then, that the making of intercultural friendships was not without effort and, in some cases, only at the risk of some personal sacrifice. However there is evidence that once students have successfully stepped 'across borders' they become more interculturally capable – more able to step out again, despite possible inherent risks and difficulties (Killick 2012).

The students who tackled these difficulties in order to widen their friendships created bridges between groups and created opportunities for functioning with the capability of *Social Relations and Participation* for themselves and others. They were judged to have high or medium capability (Table 5.2). Valuable intercultural friendships were formed, with many of the friendship groups of international students being with students of nationalities other than (white) British. I turn now to what seems to be the more common experience (Table 5.2) which, in contrast, involves more limited intercultural mixing, in particular between international and local students.

### **5.2.2 Lack of Interaction with Others**

This aspect of the picture contrasts with the positive portrayal above and reveals a lack of intercultural mixing amongst the students, in the learning as well as the social environment. It includes the tendency for students of similar backgrounds to remain together and how this is differently viewed by students.



Despite many intercultural friendships with other international students having been formed, it was evident that a significant proportion of the international students, in particular most of the Malaysia Campus students, held a desire to mix with and experience something of British people and culture that was not being fulfilled. There was, as reflected in the literature, a mis-match of expectations or hopes against reality (Chalmers and Volet 1997; Grey 2002; Mullins et al. 1995; O'Donoghue 1996; Smart et al. 2000; Sovič 2009; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998; Ward 2001).

*I wish we could mix more with the locals. Before coming here we hoped there would be smaller groups and we could make friends. Something different. But we are not really mingling well with them.* (Kai Yee, MC, IV, L, 02.02.09)

*I am kind of disappointed that I couldn't extend it [meeting up socially with others] here in [University X] campus UK – not many friends that I know of from this campus.* (Kalinidi, MC, III, M, 14.03.09)

Attempting to rationalise why this situation exists, more than half of the international students interviewed stated, unprompted, that they found the UK students particularly hard to mix with, for reasons which included unfriendliness, arrogance and unwillingness to engage with others.

*I think the people here are not as friendly as those in Malaysia and so it's quite hard to approach them and they don't come to you as often, even if you know them.* (Myung Eun, MC, III, L, 03.02.09)

*The locals here we are not that close to because they talk to each other only.* (Huey Yi, MC, III, L, 02.02.09)

*People are more secluded, like, in their own groups whereas in Malaysia Campus even though you are in your own group, at least you do see each other and you smile and you talk. But here no.* (Tien Tien, MC, III, L, 10.03.09)

The apparent 'stand-offishness' of the British students could be fuelling the tendency for international students therefore to remain together. I was told that interactions were also inhibited socially and academically because of too great a priority given by British students to socialising rather than working; a lack of willingness to engage in and learn from group work; and too great an emphasis placed on social activities centred on alcohol. It appeared that some international students who possessed the desire and willingness to interact more widely were restricted in terms of their functioning and, therefore, in terms of the opportunities to further develop this and, hence, other capabilities.

Acute awareness of the situation and relative inability to function with *Social Relations and Participation* was in contrast to the apparent ambivalence or lack of capability displayed by Suzanne from the UK who, through being provoked to reflect by having participated in the interview, described her

limited mixing outside her white UK group of friends. She said: 'I've kind of missed out a little bit on that which is a shame. It's quite sad really.' Perhaps she genuinely now saw that it was an opportunity missed, yet I sense her description of 'meaning to go' to the pharmacy international evening, and her insistence that 'they [students from Malaysia] are really, really friendly' maybe demonstrated her ambivalence towards culturally different others, whilst attempting to demonstrate that she was not prejudiced (Harrison and Peacock 2007). Suzanne also told me about how she expected to get to know some of the Malaysia Campus students better through her friends who had spent their second year studying in Malaysia. However it didn't happen.

*I thought that, because my friends had got to know them in Malaysia, they would have mixed when they returned but they didn't seem to mix. It was almost like they hadn't left once they were back. It was all so separate.*

*(Suzanne, UK, IV, L, 15.02.09)*

As the relationships were not maintained by her friends, Suzanne - though displaying some disapproval at the behaviour of her friends - may have had neither the desire nor ability to interact outside of her comfort zone. Suzanne might have been more likely to develop this capability were she not constrained by her friends' lack of capability.

Nearly all participants said they thought the student population tended to be divided by national or cultural grouping. True though this might be (Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Gill 2007; Humfrey et al. 2001; O'Donoghue 1996; UKCOSA 2004), perhaps some indication of students' intercultural capability is shown by their reaction to this situation. While some students tended to apportion blame to other groups, many viewed the grouping as applying across the board, seeing the tendency to group within themselves and their own groups as well as within others. For some students it was simply the norm, seen as the way things happen, with no opinion expressed about whether it was a good or a bad thing. However, for others it was an unwelcome element of their experience. Disappointment was evident in comments by five Malaysia Campus students who, when they joined the UK campus cohort, seemed to be surprised – shocked even – by the lack of mixing.

*I know that in the UK you have all sorts of nationalities here and I thought that everybody would equally mingle with each other but that is not quite the case. It's segregated. It's always the same people moving in the group of their own kind. It's difficult to break into the group and start mingling. That's the bit I find difficult.*

*(Kalindi, MC, III, M, 14.03.09)*

*It's just kind of weird getting here and seeing it – just kind of weird when you see it going on*

*(Tien Tien, MC, III, L, 10.03.09)*

A small number of students acknowledged that grouping does occur in Malaysia, though to a lesser extent. However the consensus amongst the Malaysia Campus students was that the class in the UK was considerably more

split by campus and nationality, which for them was unfamiliar, unwelcome and unexpected. On this theme, Sarah, a UK student, expressed frustration at how students formed into separate cultural groups. I suspect that this came partly from her being a mature student, hence more ‘worldly’ and accepting of others than perhaps some of her younger classmates, as observed in some other studies (Dunne 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Parsons 2010; Sovič 2009).

*What annoys me is, even when we first started and when everyone was new together, they just grouped themselves. We’re all human at the end of the day but there seems to be some big obstacles to that. (Sarah, UK, III, H, 03.02.09)*

Some international students described how, despite their attempts not to mix predominantly with co-nationals, it appeared to happen naturally.

*I think that all the Africans on our course have tended to - have slowly merged into one group – which we didn’t really plan to but we have.  
(Jennie, Int (UK), IV, M, 03.03.09)*

Similarly, we saw how the students from Hong Kong described the tendency for students from their country to remain with each other, to the exclusion of others (p91). This tends to reduce opportunities for functioning with the capability of *Social Relations and Participation* as it inhibits interactions outside of students’ ‘natural’ cultural groups.

Although Tables 5.1 and 5.2 give a sense of the extent of capability amongst the students, they do not capture the apparent mis-match in capability and functioning for some students. There were differences in the underlying feelings of either satisfaction or disappointment and desire for greater mixing within the groups, not evident from the tables. Across the groups there appeared to be a range in the extent of formation of intercultural friendships. However the biggest difference between individuals seemed to be the desire – in many cases unfulfilled – to mix more widely. The reality of the situation, when in contrast to students’ desire and expectations, engendered evident feelings of disappointment and some frustration, which I will refer to repeatedly in this and in the following two chapters. Disappointment can produce different psychological and physiological reactions in individuals, including frustration, stress, withdrawal and depression or alternatively a determination to overcome the cause of the problem (Bell 1985; Segerstrom 2006). Arguably, then, the mis-match in expectations and reality can have a tangible effect upon the well-being of students. The international students who had been studying in the UK from the outset appeared generally more sanguine about the lack of cultural mixing; they recognised (and indeed highlighted) a lack and difficulty of interaction with British students, but expressed no particular desire for anything more.

In the wider literature, students have reported feeling that they ‘fitted in’ better with those of similar cultural and notably, but not exclusively, language backgrounds (Bochner et al. 2001; Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Hyland et al.

2008; Volet and Ang 1998). Volet and Ang (1998) have used the term 'cultural-emotional connectedness' to describe the easier relationship afforded by having things in common such as language, humour and heritage. Accordingly, the sentiment that 'it's just easier' to mix with people of similar background was a reason offered by students for there not being more intercultural mixing. Most students' friendship circles were predominantly of their own culture. The quotations below illustrate some examples of friends having things in common, for example similar background; a similar upbringing; content and style of conversations; sense of humour and a sense of understanding each other's feelings (in the case of international students especially, being away from home).

*Because most of my friends are Muslims we have things in common*  
(Soraya, UK, III, H, 02.12.08)

*Even the content of a conversation is slightly different from what we talk to our Malaysian friends. Because the lifestyle is different and the whole growing up is different, so the content is different.* (Siew Lan, MC, III, L, 10.02.09)

*We have the same feeling, like we are away from home, we have the same background.* (Tien Li, MC, III, L, 03.02.09)

It was hard to participate socially when students had different social interests and needs, made additionally difficult through not having an intrinsic appreciation of each other's sub-culture.

*Because I feel sometime that our jokes are different and sometime they crack jokes and they would laugh and I wouldn't understand it. It's hard to grasp interculture and it's a bit different. I do try to understand but it's not that easy.*  
(Ken Hooi, MC, IV, M, 03.12.08)

*To start with at the very beginning of university we weren't altogether and I didn't really speak to [name x] or [name y]. It was just - sometimes it's just this conversation thing that you can have together which is a lot easier. Like African jokes. Just little things, like [name y] is Ghanaian the same as me but [name x] is Nigerian and there is always a little conflict between Nigerians and Ghanaians; this kind of little joke that nobody else gets. I suppose that's common ground.*  
(Jennie, Int (UK), IV, M, 03.03.09)

*Because I can't drink and I can't understand why people have to go to pubs in order to meet new friends, so that is one of the biggest restrictions as well. When people say 'Do we want to go clubbing?' I can't say 'Yes'. I don't think, for me, that is the way to meet new people anyway. Why can't we just maybe have a dinner party or whatever in someone's place or like that?*  
(Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)

However, finding common ground through other means provided the basis for friendships. Sixteen students talked about having made intercultural

friendships through societies or other social activities. Wen Peng said how much she thought this helped:

*Through my involvement with the Magic Society I realised that it really helped in getting to know more people, and the common interest really bridges the gap a lot.*  
(Wen Peng, MC, IV, H, 08.03.10)

*I don't really have British friends in this course unfortunately. But in church I do. Because I went to the church in [place] and it's quite a big church I mix with different people as well so I've got to know some British girls. Because we are in the same state and sharing group we will share things like recent updates or what worries do we have.*  
(Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)

Overall I have found evidence for a strong inherent tendency towards socialising with those who feel familiar, for reasons of similarity, comfort and ease. To break out of this pattern of behaviour, as is required by the intercultural capability of *Social Relations and Participation*, was often not easy. It could mean taking a conscious decision and action which might go against the norm; it could involve putting oneself into potentially uncomfortable situations; and risked alienating one's friends. However the development of the capability of *Social Relations and Participation* opened up opportunities for friendships, discovery and recognition of fellow students. It provided the basis upon which students could start to share and appreciate something of each other and their lives and begin to see the commonalities as well as the differences.

### **5.2.3 Intercultural Communication**

I discussed above how ease of interaction facilitated relationship formation and friendships. One key aspect of the interaction is intercultural communication. This section illustrates how intercultural communication contributes to the success or failure of relationships and how this component of the capability of *Social Relations and Participation* is unlikely to be achieved without a degree of effort.

Discussion of the learning environment with students provoked comments about difficulties in communication hampering interactions between students whose first language was different. It was evident that students had to make additional effort to communicate and understand each other and it was often reported as easier not to bother. Even with extra effort, conversation just did not flow.

*Sometimes they cannot understand my accent and that's the major problem for them. They don't understand what I am talking [about]. And sometimes I cannot really catch out what they are trying to say.*  
(Kimi, Int (MC), III, M, 02.12.08)

*Their English is so limited. So it's really hard to communicate and it's such a barrier between us.*  
(Shaun, UK, IV, L, 23.02.10)

This accords with other research in which UK students describe the conscious effort or 'mindfulness' (Harrison and Peacock 2010) required for successful cross-cultural interactions, in terms of the level of language used and being sensitive to what was being said (Dunne 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Peacock and Harrison 2009). However it was apparent that the issue of poor communication was wider than just the language spoken, involving other cultural and behavioural factors and norms. Seven students (UK and international) described the lack of dialogue that often occurred within groups, their frustrations about this and, in some cases, their attempts to stimulate conversation and sharing of ideas. The reasons given for the lack of conversation varied - and it was not exclusively between students of different first languages - but included: students translating for each other (which inhibited the natural flow of conversation); a reticence to speak out; an unwillingness to share ideas; and a cultural barrier in terms of not feeling able to speak out in case of saying the wrong thing and causing offence. It appeared that students either lacked the capability for *Social Relations and Participation*, as evidenced by their lack of intercultural communication, or their functioning was restricted through the actions of others.

Six students (four UK, one Malaysia Campus, one Hong Kong) said they often took on the role of group leaders because they felt there would otherwise be so little dialogue and sharing of ideas. Others' capabilities and agency were potentially being expanded through *their* functioning as they sought to enable others to communicate and participate. For example, Shaun specifically e-mailed group members for ideas as he felt that some international students, who spoke little in the group, might then be able to contribute. Sadie tried to include others in group work discussions, particularly when conversation did not flow. She tried to ensure that students whose first language was not English did understand and was not afraid gently to correct their mistakes, although she described her dilemma when she was trying to be comprehensible to international students.

*But I think to myself, if I find them hard to understand....I speak quite fast and I have a bit of an accent so I feel that I might be hard to understand. But if I ask them that then I feel like I might be patronising them and, at the same time, I know that they are not going to say that they can't understand me - and then they go home and they come back they say that they didn't quite know what I meant by that.*  
(Sadie, UK, IV, M, 01.02.10)

Difficulties and misunderstandings can arise through pace of conversation, idiomatic or regional usage, or unfamiliar context (Byram 1997; Sovič 2009; Welikala and Watkins 2008). Aspects of non-verbal communication, which account for much of the communication message transmitted, are culture-specific, hence unfamiliar to others, causing feelings of discomfort. Jokes and

humour too are culture-specific and their use can be (unintentionally) excluding or even offensive.

The negative effect of intercultural communication probably applied to an even greater extent socially, with friendship groups often being determined by language. Again it concerned ease of conversation, including familiarity with norms of dialogue and topics of everyday conversation.

*I think that most people will just tend to stick to the people who speak the same language and that is mostly the case. It's very rare to have a group where they come from different nationalities.* (Jane, Int (UK), III, H, 03.02.09)

*Maybe British students feel more comfortable hanging round with other British students because it's easier to communicate* (Sahen, UK, IV, M, 10.03.10)

*You are adapting to a new environment and [adapt] the way you talk to people; because some people may think that they talk in a very polite way but sometimes they are being very rude. One of my friends, and maybe English people, tend to ask 'How are you? How have you been?' but Malaysians think that is rubbish. If my friend [doesn't know what to talk about] then we'll talk about the weather! But if me and my close friend walk to lectures we just tend to be quiet because we don't know what to talk [about] and [we] find it very normal; while other British people find a lot to talk about and chat and have their own opinions.* (Julia, Int (UK), III, H, 03.03.09)

A need for easy communication in social relationships was noted by Jane, from Hong Kong, who described how, although she had friends from other cultural and language groups, sharing something personal or feeling fully relaxed could only be done with someone who shared the same language. Research shows that friendship formation tends to happen more easily when communication flows and that students need to be able to relax and feel comfortable with friends (Brown 2009a; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Peacock and Harrison 2009; Swami et al. 2010; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998).

It was apparent from my study that trying to make conversation and establish relationships in a different language took some courage as well as effort.

*Sometimes making the first step outwards is the hardest step and overcoming that fear of my consciousness and overcoming the fear of not being understood. I think that is the real hindrance, the real barrier in understanding each other and to establishing that friendship as well. So I think we just have to be brave.* (Ken Hooi, MC, IV, M, 03.12.08)

The need for confidence and courage was recognised by other international students. For example, Jeanette, from Hong Kong, marvelled at the ability of

some of the relatively newly-arrived students from Malaysia Campus to speak out and how inspirational she and her friends found that.

*English people are very welcoming and friendly. I think they get used to coming across different people from different countries but it's ourselves who have this barrier. It's just a barrier in our selves. But my friends and me changed in the last few [months] since the Malaysian students came because the Malaysian students have English as their second language and they are comfortable to speak English and we saw them and we saw other Asians do that. So when I see them do that I think 'Why don't I?' We just need a little bit more courage. No people laugh! We just need to do more and more pro-actively.*  
(Jeanette, Int (UK), III, M, 27.01.08)

It is apparent that attitudinal and behavioural factors, as well as language itself, have a marked impact upon communication. The development of intercultural communicative ability therefore depends upon sensitivity to the multiplicity of factors which impinge upon language use and conversation. Mutual interaction provides the potential for students to develop their linguistic and social skills and strategies for communicating when language impedes the flow of conversation, hence expand their capability for *Social Relations and Participation*.

This section has illustrated how the capability for *Social Relations and Participation* can be hard to put into practice, requiring a degree of effort and, on occasions, difficult personal choices about friendships. Interacting productively with those from different cultures might require facing unwelcoming behaviour, coping with difficult communication, finding courage and finding common ground. It appears that those students who made the effort to cross borders connected the inclusion of others with their own well-being. Their actions helped to reduce barriers, enhance agency in others and create a more enabling environment for capability development. Whilst many students were able to function moderately with this capability, there were far fewer at the high than the low end of the spectrum. Some students at the low end possessed some capability but were unable to function to the extent they desired.

I move now to a capability which underpins *Social Relations and Participation*, namely *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, which concerns respect and recognition of others.

### **5.3 Intercultural Capability 2: Respect, Dignity and Recognition**

The capability discussed in this section, summarised below (Extract from Table 4.6 Final Capability Set for Being Intercultural; Chapter 4, p81), is fundamental to conceptions of cosmopolitanism (Appiah 2006; Appiah 2008a; Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002) whose justice-centred approaches are founded on the relations of human beings with each other and the recognition, respect and sense of responsibility afforded to others.



<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Respect, dignity and recognition	1. Having and showing respect for others; being treated with respect. 2. Recognising, accepting and respecting difference. 3. Recognising a responsibility to others. 4. Allowing and valuing inclusion and contributions of others; being included and having one's contributions valued. 5. Having a voice and allowing others their voice.

This capability proved difficult to identify directly, hence I have used a number of factors as indicators of respect, or lack of respect. The first section largely relates to the academic environment and concerns students' recognition of others and their contributions to collaborative work. This included having voice, which manifested itself as being able to speak, and as a sense of belonging and acceptance. The second section relates to the social environment and concerns the extent to which students respect and accommodate difference. This capability requires that students are aware of and sensitive to individual differences in order to accept and respect them.

Table 5.3 shows a similar overall range for the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* to Social Relations and Participation. Here however, no students from the Malaysia Campus featured in the high category because, although they experienced respect within their social friendships, within the academic environment there still appeared to be a lack of recognition from others and some clashes over difference.

Table 5.3 Spectrum of Intercultural Capabilities: *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*

Degree of Capability	Student Group			Overall
	UK (15)	Int (7)	MC (22)	
High	4	2	0	6
Medium	5	5	7 (yr 4), 2 (yr3)	19
Low	6	0	6 (yr4), 7 (yr 3)	19

It seemed that this capability and, notably, its functioning, was particularly affected by the capability of others in allowing students freedom, choices and contribution. Recognition of others, and of a responsibility to others, was significant in the opening up or closing down of agency in fellow students.

### 5.3.1 Recognition of Voice and Contributions

Group work was the area most discussed by the students in relation to the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*. As group work is the subject of Chapter 7, I have kept discussion of it relatively brief here. Attitudes towards other group members were discussed by many students. Half the students interviewed, from across the groups, raised the problems caused by laziness, indifference or poor standards of work by students in groups. I have interpreted this behaviour as demonstrating a lack of responsibility towards others and, given the number of students who discussed this, it appears to impact significantly. Some students referred to a lack of engagement across the board whilst others, notably some of the Malaysia Campus students, saw it as exclusive to the UK campus students.

*I'd hear from other groups as well as mine that some people would turn up for the first meeting and only do the presentation, and in between the process they are not really there. For us it's surprising because in Malaysian Campus we try to contribute as much as we can because we want to get the best possible mark for each and every one of us, because if I don't do my work it's going to affect the quality of that work and I don't get as much marks as well. But I think that kind of mentality is not so obvious here and some students don't really care.*

*(Wen Peng, MC, III, H, 17.03.09)*

Others struggled to participate, to be given a voice and to have their contributions to group work acknowledged. Two students from the Malaysia Campus felt excluded from group work activities during their first UK semester; two others said that it was initially hard to get local students to listen to their point of view and that this was a common experience shared by many of their classmates. These conversations suggested that, on the whole, the Malaysia Campus students were experiencing behaviour which made them feel excluded and which diminished their capacity for self-expression. Despite their ability and will to participate and contribute, other's actions, or lack of capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, inhibited their functioning. Yet in contrast I heard from two other international students about the experience of being in a group with two Malaysia Campus students who were over-insistent and dominating. I also interviewed one of these students, who described the unpleasantness as they had to 'force' other group members to produce the work in their way. There certainly appeared to be an issue of equity of voice and recognition of others' points of view in that group.

With regard to having a voice, difficulties existed because of students' own capability, because of others' lack of capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* in allowing others their voice, or because these factors combined. As discussed earlier<sup>29</sup>, some international students found it difficult to have their own voice because of language or cultural influences. Sandra, from the UK, told me that the louder students tended to dominate in groups and,

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<sup>29</sup> See section 5.2.3

although students' levels of confidence varied across all groups, the louder, more vociferous students were usually, though not always, UK students. These findings are reflected in the literature in which some international students have reported that their responses (and sometimes they) are ignored in class by their local peers; they feel intimidated by being in the minority; they avoid speaking rather than risk making mistakes in English, despite knowing the answers, which is not only frustrating, but can also lead to others mistakenly considering them to be ignorant (Harrison and Peacock 2007; Hellstén and Prescott 2004; Luzio-Lockett 1998; Mullins et al. 1995).

Yet there were instances of students being given or encouraged to have a voice by others. Sahen, from the UK, recognised that the tendency for many international students to remain quiet might be because they do not feel comfortable in speaking out (in English). Ken Hooi, from Malaysia, described how the respect and friendliness shown by other students helped her to 'be brave' and speak up, despite her fear of being misunderstood.

There were also examples of students recognising contributions from others. Specifically, three UK students, initially sceptical about the benefits of group work, had come to recognise the value of others' contributions, particularly learning to play to each other's strengths.

*I think it is good to share people's ideas, especially when we were making posters because I'm not very artistic at all. I don't mind doing the research and finding out about it but when it comes to making a poster I'm just a bit clueless. Well there are some people who have just been so brilliant at designing things and I would never have come up with that idea on my own. And that's the whole point isn't it, to draw upon one another's strengths?*

*(Suzanne, UK, IV, M, 15.02.09)*

One aspect of the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* concerns the recognition of a responsibility for others – encompassed by some of the actions of the mobility students on their return to the UK. I described earlier how some of the returning mobility students had acted as bridge-builders, facilitating friendship formation and adjustment to life in the UK for some of the Malaysia Campus students. Through maintaining and promoting friendships they recognised and demonstrated a responsibility to their classmates. However there was a distinct lack of meaningful interaction by a number of the second cohort of mobility students on return to the UK. I was told by five different students (across the groups) that, despite having been made so welcome by the students at Malaysia Campus, some of the mobility students (and in fact the UK cohort as a whole) had not been especially welcoming. This suggested a lack amongst many students of the capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, as judged by their lack of awareness of responsibility for others, as well as for *Social Relations and Participation*, as indicated by their reticence to interact outside their group.

These observations lead me to ponder whether home students could be considered to hold any moral obligation – whether perceived by them or not – to act as ‘hosts’ for the international students. UK students, in the main, might be considered to be in a position of relative power with respect to international students, being on ‘home’ ground and therefore having the advantage of familiarity. Sen (2009) argues that with power also comes the obligation to consider how one’s actions can reduce injustice and promote freedoms of others. Home students are unlikely to enter university with such a responsibility in mind, but it is evident that some students displayed a greater concern for the well-being of others; and through their interest and willingness to make an effort, helped to expand capability and promote agency in others.

The lack of capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* within the academic environment appeared to exist largely through indifference to and ignorance of each other’s needs. There were clashes of expectations about group work, exacerbated by the seemingly irresponsible behaviour of some students. Excluding behaviour negatively impacts upon students’ further attempts to participate and gain recognition, leading to a loss of agency and possible diminishing of their capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* (Hellstén and Prescott 2004; Luzio-Lockett 1998; Tan and Lowe 2009).

Having looked at some aspects of this capability within the academic environment, I now turn to look at how sensitivity to others and their needs impacts upon the social environment of students.

### ***5.3.2 Recognising, Respecting and Accepting Difference***

The components of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* discussed in this section primarily concern difference: specifically the recognising, respecting and accepting of difference. Students’ attitude and outlook affected how they dealt with situations of difference. At times the differences could be overlooked and compromises made, whilst on other occasions the differences appeared to be insurmountable.

International students studying abroad might already be more sensitive to cultural differences than local students (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Marginson 2009; Otten 2003). It was not surprising, therefore, that in my study it was international students in the main who raised issues of culture, nationality and difference. However, it is of note that the three British Asian students I interviewed also appeared to be particularly sensitive to cultural differences. Sahen offered that his cultural upbringing made him more open to difference. Soraya, a British Pakistani student who was Muslim, said that international students were more likely than British students to ask her about wearing a headscarf and her religion. She suggested that international students had a greater awareness of, or perhaps curiosity about, different people.

Some UK students expressed an element of sympathy and respect for international students who were faced with accommodating to a foreign

environment and recognised that the needs of students differed. Sahen appeared to show some insight into the situation of international students, when he said:

*I haven't got a problem with [groups of students sticking together] because naturally if you're an international student, you're away from home and you look for something that reminds you of home or something that you can relate to.* (Sahen, UK, IV, H, 10.03.10)

Similarly Jacqui, from Switzerland, who had spent a semester at the Malaysia Campus, recognised the difficulties for some international students:

*There is a cultural shock aspect to it as well because, if you imagine coming to the UK for the first time and all the British students, especially in Fresher's Week, are just going out and getting drunk and you just want to learn about the UK, and you just want to figure out where things are and whatever, it's probably quite weird.* (Jacqui, Int (UK), IV, H, 28.04.09)

This comment takes me onto the drinking of alcohol, which was a recurrent theme that encompassed elements of respect and sensitivity to others. Some international students observed what they saw as an apparent need of British students to drink alcohol in order to socialise and an inability of many of them to understand and accept that not everyone chose to drink or, if they did, then not to the same extent. Drinking to excess was evidently viewed as a practice which was not worthy of respect and was offered as a reason why there was not more inter-group socialising.

*Maybe we don't go to their things as much because most of their stuff is, like, drinking session and stuff like that and so it's not our type. The culture is totally different. I don't say that Malaysians don't go out and drink; they also drink but not that much. Not in the same way.* (Kimi, Int (MC), IV, M, 27.01.10)

A number of Malaysia Campus students pointed out that their Pharmacy Society had been based on community social outreach events as well as social events, whereas in the UK it was based primarily around clubbing and drinking activities and was therefore seen as excluding for them.

*I did more in Malaysia, because I think PharmSoc here, it's mainly about parties and they don't usually do so much about [other activities]. I would definitely have joined more, but personally I don't like parties. So the activities are mainly about clubbing and I don't like clubbing, so I just won't go.* (Wee Ting, MC, IV, L, 01.12.08)

Different beliefs and choices surrounding the drinking of alcohol are a constant source of social separation amongst students (Bartram 2007; Bruch and Barty 1998; Harrison and Peacock 2007; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Peacock and Harrison 2009; Severiens et al. 2006; UKCOSA 2004). There

was some meeting in the middle though by some students in my study, as evidenced by a comment from Suraj:

*Students from Malaysia are our close friends too; they come out with us as well and they learn about our drinking culture! (Suraj, UK, IV, M, 08.12.08)*

In contrast to what appeared to be the majority experience of social separation through alcohol, three students told me how they or their friends did not drink alcohol but were nonetheless included in activities involving drinking. Respect was shown for the students who did not drink alcohol. For example, Sadie described her admiration for her Hindu friend who, although she did not drink alcohol, joined in social activities, such as clubbing, which often involved people drinking a lot. Students who did not drink accordingly appreciated that their choice about drinking alcohol was respected.

*When I go out I don't drink alcohol but I still go out and the fact that my friends respect that makes the difference. (Jauhar, Int (UK), IV, H, 08.12.08)*

This respect for and accommodation of each other's choices and difference expanded capability and functioning, not only of the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, but also of *Social Relations and Participation* through their intercultural friendships. Students' functioning simultaneously enabled capability in their friends.

Although clashes of social practices and attitudes did inhibit mixing, some students acknowledged that differences existed and could not be ignored, but that it was a matter of respecting, adapting and including those differences rather than treating them as obstacles. Sarah (from the UK) for example, with friends from different religions, told me how they rearranged activities around religious needs when necessary. It was not seen as a problem – rather it was respect for difference.

*There is no barrier in terms of, oh well different people have different religions, different times of going to church or the synagogue or whatnot. It doesn't [cause a problem]. Everyone's like, 'Oh well I can't come then because I'm going to wherever' and it's 'Oh right, oh well we'll do something else tomorrow'. (Sarah, UK, IV, H, 21.01.10)*

Individuality and difference were recognised by students as important and it was apparent that there was a balance to be struck between seeing the person as an individual, not solely represented by their nationality or culture, yet being aware that one's background matters.

*I think it's important to promote cultures and things because there are two different ways of looking at it and in some ways you should accept that everyone is just a person and it doesn't matter what background they come from but, at the same time, you should realise that their backgrounds do matter. You can't just box people. You do need to acknowledge that people*

*have different backgrounds. So it's trying to find the balance between those two things.*  
*(Jacqui, Int (UK), IV, H, 28.04.09)*

Jacqui above, Sarah (p87 & p95) 'We're all human at the end of the day' and Pei Ann, quoted below, illustrate how some students were developing a cosmopolitan way of thinking, as they not only accommodated individual differences, but saw the common humanity beneath some comparatively superficial cultural differences.

*I'm almost at the end of the course and I'm almost two years here and I do realise that there are a lot of things, a lot of similarities in the culture if you want to view it that way.*

*But I suppose I've just come to an understanding that we are really the same people....kind of different but basically the same.*

*(Pei Ann, MC, IV, M, 17.02.09)*

Examination of the data against the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* highlighted the extent to which respect featured in students' relationships. Students who had a degree of this capability were able to respect and accommodate difference, find basic shared interests and recognise common humanity. When students were not afforded respect or recognition – either personally or for their contributions – their capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* was diminished. Having the freedom to function in this regard was highly dependent upon the capability of others.

### **5.4 Intercultural Capability 3: Mind and Imagination**

I turn now to a capability which involves a challenge to how one views others and their behaviours and values and the challenge that this might present to one's self. (See extract below from Table 4.6 Final Capability Set for Being Intercultural; Chapter 4, p81)

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Mind and imagination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seeking to understand others, their worlds and situations.</li> <li>2. Able to imagine and appreciate one's local and wider connectivities.</li> <li>3. Open-mindedness.</li> <li>4. Willing to engage in moral and ethical debate; to explore disagreement; to accept disagreement.</li> </ol>

The capability of *Mind and Imagination* concerns being open to different perspectives and points of view and willing to explore some of the personal and ethical challenges thereby encountered. It also involves gaining an understanding of others and their worlds and situations and, through this, becoming more able to appreciate one's local and wider connectivities. I show in this section that, having been challenged by exposure to different practices

and perspectives, many students had developed capability as they learnt and gained understanding about the lives and situations of others. Key to enabling this capability was functioning with *Social Relations and Participation*, which enabled the formation and development of their intercultural friendships. Table 5.4 shows this capability across the students interviewed and illustrates a notable overall shift from low to medium capability. It shows a generally greater level of capability for the international (including Malaysia Campus) students compared to the other capabilities, reflecting the challenge that inevitably comes through studying and living in a different country.

Table 5.4 Spectrum of Intercultural Capabilities: *Mind and Imagination*

Degree of Capability	Student Group			Overall
	UK (15)	Int (7)	MC (22)	
				All students (44)
High	2	4	1 (yr 4)	7
Medium	9	3	8 (yr 4), 6 (yr3)	26
Low	4	0	4 (yr4), 3 (yr 3)	11

Some, notably British, students had come from what they described as a ‘very narrow’ background in terms of exposure to other nationalities, cultures or religions. The UK students in my study had given little consideration to intercultural aspects of their lives or education before coming to university, but had been provoked to engage with difference. For some, therefore, the change to being in an internationalised university environment was marked and, in fact, took some adjustment. Some commented on how surprised they were to be surrounded by people from so many different parts of the world.

*I'm from Sunderland and Sunderland is very white. Until five years ago I'd probably never seen a black person living in Sunderland but it's slowly increasing. But I've come to uni and the mixture of the different cultures is a lot higher and it's nice. It was probably a bit of a shock to me because I thought 'This is weird but I'd better get used to it'. But once you get used to it, you feel like you stick out less.*  
(Simon, UK, III, M, 03.12.08)

It was inevitable, therefore, that some challenges would be encountered in feeling comfortable in an initially alien environment, and adjusting to the differences around them in terms of, for example, nationality, language, dress, religions, methods of working and behaviours. However, nearly all students saw this engagement with difference as a benefit of their university experience. It caused some students to recognise their hitherto relatively narrow experiences of exposure to different cultures and ideas.

*I think it's good that there are different people, because at school it was white basically, so it's good in preparing me for that next step in your life and you are knowing all these different kinds of people and learning from them and their cultures, where they're from and things like that.*  
(Sandra, UK, IV, M, 09.02.10)



*It's been quite nice on the pharmacy course to meet people from different backgrounds. Because I went to a Christian school I don't know much about other religions so it's been nice to meet other people like that.*

*(Sadie, UK, IV, M, 01.02.10)*

Nearly all students, from all groups, said that interacting with others of different backgrounds, cultures and persuasions had broadened their horizons and their views - albeit to greater or lesser extents as we have seen. It was apparent that the extent to which students attempted to internalise and make sense of the challenges presented affected the way in which they ultimately viewed others in comparison to themselves.

Specifically with regard to being pharmacists, Soraya and Sarah highlighted the importance of being able to recognise and consider different moral and ethical points of view and being able to develop one's own considered opinions, having themselves been challenged to question their own initial ethical standpoints. A few students also raised different staff and student approaches to teaching and learning and contrasted these with their own experience and practice. It made them reflect upon or question their own stance.

*In Malaysia, whenever lecturers say something to you, our Asian culture says that he is right, whatever he says, so your job is just to listen and jot down whatever he says. You shouldn't talk because it will affect the respect to the lecturer. But here, I like the students here, especially the white students because they are very bright. I mean they are very quick thinking, so whenever lecturers say something, especially during law classes, their response is very quick; they are not shy; they dare to talk to the lecturers and that's good. But you rarely find that the Malaysian students talk in the class. Even though we know the answer we will still be quiet. That's our way. So it's a bit different and I don't really like that culture back in Malaysia because the lecturer there – maybe he is right and maybe he is wrong. So I like that part of the culture here. Being Asian I still prefer the Asian culture but some of the culture, some of the way they [talk] is really admirable, so I need to learn from that.*

*(Kimi, Int (MC), IV, M, 27.01.10)*

More generally, a number of students described how they had become more open-minded; more likely to listen to and accept others' points of view and ways of thinking; and realised that situations were 'not always black and white' but there were lots of 'grey areas'. Previously-held stereotyped views were challenged and reduced.

*It did open my mind a lot because I think I was a little conservative but now I've grown to accept a lot of different things. I'm not so stereotyped.*

*(Wen Peng, MC, III, M, 17.03.09)*

Some of these stereotyped views concerned specific groups, and it was through getting to know individuals from these groups that stereotypes were challenged. The capability of *Social Relations and Participation* allowed students to get to know and judge the individual rather than merely associating them with the expected behaviours of a group. Traits were still seen to exist, and the quotations below show how students, whilst aware of differences and the potential difficulties that could thereby happen, demonstrated their capability for *Mind and Imagination* through their willingness to find out before making a judgement.

*There is such a lot of stereotyping and people say 'Oh [nationality of] students, they are such and such' but when you get to know them that isn't right at all. It's just whether you want to get to know them and see.*

*(Kah Yeang, MC, III, M, 17.03.09)*

*Country's not a thing; it cannot be a barrier. It's just different cultures, but if you don't know the culture how can you assume the culture's different from yours – [it's] definitely going to be different. But without discriminating or anything why don't you just try to compromise, understand, before you discriminate [against] the culture.*

*(James, Int (UK), III, M, 01.12.08)*

Jennie described having to escape the stereotyped views held by co-nationals about other groups which, in her experience, did not hold true. She felt some real conflict about whether she should ignore or challenge these views, which were still held in her home environment.

*Just having different groups around you from different areas does get you to think about some of the ideas you've got, or the way that you think about things, because different people and different cultures do think about things differently. I think it is important, as a person, to have all those different inputs so that your ideas and your way of thinking isn't skewed, and it stays sort of level and balanced - because it is very easy to become skewed. When I go back home or when I'm with certain groups, their view is not based on experience; it's just based on what they believe is the norm. So that kind of way of thinking is so unproductive and I think, 'I hope I'll never end up like that', but I think having different cultures around me makes me know it's not like that at all and I do get where other people are coming from. You do question.*

*(Jennie, Int (UK), IV, H, 03.03.09)*

The students who were able to develop the capability for *Mind and Imagination* came to realise the value in having their ideas and preconceptions challenged. The opportunities to function with this capability were presented as students found themselves in situations in which they were forced to reconsider their assumed or initial viewpoints.

Having friends from different countries or religions meant that students became more relaxed and able to discuss different practices and opinions. It helped to put issues into perspective, for example, those covered by the media.

Three UK students, in a group interview, discussed how inappropriate or unhelpful impressions of some groups are gained from the media, which are only tempered by being able to interact with others who can provide different perspectives. They felt that enforced political correctness in the UK stifles banter and relaxed conversations. However once friendships developed they realised that much of this sensitivity is unnecessary and that there is more to be gained by simply chatting and discussing issues and differences with each other. Sadie and Sam also discussed how seeing different points of view and understandings of the world helps one start to appreciate how some situations reported in the media might arise.

*I think sometimes when you hear things in the news – I can't think of a specific example but maybe stuff that is going on abroad and you don't understand why they chose to do things that way. But once you sort of get to know people and you understand what their religion is about then it makes it sort of – not completely acceptable in your head, like all the wars going on and stuff – but you begin to understand how things may have come about.*

*(Sadie, UK, IV, M, 01.02.10)*

By this, Sadie was describing how she had become more able to adopt something of a cosmopolitan attitude, which recognised her awareness of, and attempt to understand others' situations, without necessarily having to agree with them (Alexander and Thompson 2008; Appiah 2006). Interactions and discussions with others, through the capability of *Social Relations and Participation*, had enabled her to expand her world-view and develop her capability of *Mind and Imagination*.

Students described how, both socially and academically, they gained from seeing different ways of learning and thinking. They shared opinions and ideas, being exposed to different points of view.

*I learn to appreciate other cultures and the way they are different from me. I learn to appreciate the way that they are and the way that they work.*

*(Jeanette, Int (UK), III, M, 27.01.08)*

*It made me take a step back because I hadn't thought about it in that way.*

*(Sarah, UK, IV,H, 21.01.10)*

The accounts above illustrate how students had, in the main, found themselves challenged and had adapted their views and thinking through being exposed to difference. This was not planned, had arisen through their intercultural friendships, but something they could describe as a recognisable process. Although this was a positive shift in many cases, there had also been some reinforcing or forming of negative stereotypical opinions, particularly in the academic environment, as evidenced by comments about cultural traits in particular. Some of the main themes were a general unwillingness to mix with others (which was applied to various different groups of students), the unfriendliness of British students and their relative lack of conscientiousness.

*I find the British students on my course really arrogant. Sometimes they can be a bit discriminat[ing] as well, like they will refuse to talk to us, things like that.*  
(Sue Wen, MC, IV, M, 17.03.10)

*In group work they [British students] just like to get it done, anything will do kind of mentality.*  
(Chia Yin, MC, III, M, 10.02.09)

*It's very hard to get close to them [the British] because they are more reserved on the inside but when you meet them the first time they are willing to talk to you and they are very courteous but it's very hard to get close to them.*  
(Chung Jin, MC, III, M, 17.02.09)

*They [Malaysia Campus students] don't integrate.*  
(Sophie, UK, IV, L, 05.02.09)

It appears that these students had been unable to find some common basis upon which to engage with difference and recognise the individual person. Their capability for *Mind and Imagination* was low as they found 'others' to be the problem. Additionally, some students' lack of capability for *Social Relations and Participation* might have stifled the potential for capability or functioning with *Mind and Imagination* in others as well as themselves.

Examination of the data with respect to the capability of *Mind and Imagination* has demonstrated that all students had encountered some challenge to their views and opinions through being within a multicultural environment at university. For many students this had resulted in a broadening of their minds, while for a few it had created or reinforced negative opinions about members of other groups. Coming from a situation of relative cultural narrowness, some students had embraced the cosmopolitan approach to difference and had used the opportunities presented to actively consider and explore difference and how it related to their own lives. Examination of the data against this capability has demonstrated the potential created by the internationalised higher education environment for students to experience, be challenged by, to learn from and to develop their thinking and opinions through being alongside others who are different from them.

I now look at the final capability of *Enquiry and Reflection*, which builds further on the capability of *Mind and Imagination*. It concerns the capacity of students to internalise experiences and challenges of difference such that they value and seek to learn from difference as they develop their personal identities.

## **5.5 Intercultural Capability 4: Enquiry and Reflection**

The interviews clarified how intercultural friendships and working relationships provided a medium through which students could question, explore and develop their identities. Students might view their relationships

and experiences outside the formal learning environment as part of their overall learning process and self-development (Brooks 2007; Montgomery and McDowell 2009) and in my study, relationships were described as being about learning from each other, on both social and academic levels. In this final section on the capability of *Enquiry and Reflection* I discuss how students found value, interest and pleasure through learning with and from others who were different from them. The components of this capability are shown in the extract from Table 4.6 below. Working with the interview data led me to include ‘enjoying difference’ as a component of this capability as it emerged as something important to the students and more than merely ‘valuing difference’.

Extract from Table 4.6 Final Capability Set for Being Intercultural (Chapter 4, p81)

<i>Capability</i>	<i>Attributes for being intercultural</i>
Enquiry and reflection	1. Seeking to learn from others, about others, their worlds and situations. 2. Valuing and enjoying difference 3. Able to think about one’s own situation, values, beliefs, received knowledge, practices and behaviours in the light of those of others.

Table 5.5 shows the distribution of the capability of *Enquiry and Reflection* across the group, showing a similar overall distribution to the first two capabilities. A majority of students had experienced some personal challenge and re-shaping of their selves through their intercultural experiences.

Table 5.5 Spectrum of Intercultural Capabilities: *Enquiry and Reflection*

Degree of Capability	Student Group			Overall
	UK	Int	MC	
High	3	1	1 (yr 4)	5
Medium	6	6	7 (yr 4), 3 (yr3)	22
Low	6	0	5 (yr4), 6 (yr 3)	17

Academically it was through collaborative working that students learnt the most from and about each other. Socially there appeared to be an awareness of the learning which comes through intercultural friendships, as evidenced by the words and descriptions used by a number of the students. A real desire to learn about others was evident in some cases, as cultures, traditions, backgrounds and food were compared and contrasted. Within these friendships there were rich opportunities for functioning with the capability of *Enquiry and Reflection* as students shared their stories and lives.

### **5.5.1 Actively Seeking to Learn about Others**

Under the capability of *Mind and Imagination* we saw how students had been challenged to engage with difference, through the situations which confronted them. However, some students *actively* sought to learn from and about others – functioning with *Enquiry and Reflection*. The importance of being with people from and gaining some understanding of other cultures was raised by over half of the international students, probably because they were living and studying in a foreign country.

*My first intention was to meet people from different places except Hong Kong because I don't want to be in British culture and speaking my own language as well – there's kind of no point doing that.* (Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)

*It is important to me. I've always liked to travel anyway and I think that being in an international environment tells you a lot more about different people and different cultures. There are different opinions, different variety and different points of view. It just makes everything more interesting.*

(Kayla, Int (MC), IV, M, 01.12.08)

Others were stimulated to further engage with others, having discovered value and enjoyment through their intercultural experiences at university.

*I love to learn, like, the way they cook their food, or their languages, or different things about their cultures. And it's inspired me to maybe go travelling later on and, you know, learn things about their cultures.*

(Soraya, UK, III, H, 02.12.08)

### **5.5.2 Enjoyment with Others**

A small but significant proportion of students expressed a real element of enjoyment through experiencing differences and seeing life's rich tapestry of cultures. From the enthusiasm with which the students described these things, the opportunities to share and learn were valued and treasured within their relationships. More than accepting or even valuing difference, they reflected the cosmopolitan ethos of rejoicing in difference. Again it was mostly, but not exclusively, international students who expressed strong feelings about difference and enjoying difference. Students increased their capability for *Enquiry and Reflection* as they enjoyed sharing elements of their own and others' cultures.

*I like to share the culture as well and I used to learn the language, like bits and pieces, so they used to share the knowledge and we used to cook – let them taste what our food mean and it's really nice. My food, they never tasted it before and so they really enjoy it. And it makes me feel a bit different.*

(Kimi, Int (MC), IV, H, 27.01.10)

*That [having friends of different nationality] to me is more of an interest than a divide because we are all so different – even within your own country. But when you go further afield it's even better. I think it's great and you get to learn so much more because, OK people in the UK are different nationalities and you can learn from them, but when you are with people from abroad as well you can learn so much more about people, different ways of life, different ways of life and everything.* (Sarah, UK, III, H, 03.02.09)

These students were valuing and reflecting upon difference as they sought to understand and learn from each other's situations and to consider their own position in the light of these. They were able to develop as more cosmopolitan individuals as, through their enjoyment of difference, they could explore and learn about aspects of others' (and their own) lives. This brings me to the potential effect of, or requirement for, the capability of *Enquiry and Reflection*, namely a re-examination of one's identity.

### ***5.5.3 Effect upon One's Identity***

Students found that their own lives and perspectives were thrown into contrast. In Chapter 3 I discussed how cosmopolitanism is connected to the concept of the self and identity and how this is shaped and influenced by one's exposure to a variety of experiences and cultures throughout life. What otherwise appear to be natural features of students' lives might only be questioned when one's own culture is thrown into light through being with others who have different frameworks of meaning (Alexander and Thompson 2008; Jary and Jary 2000; Marginson 2009; Williams 2005). For example Sue Wen described how seeing news reports and reading newspapers both from the UK and from her own country made her question the government and policies in her own country – that seeing different systems had 'opened her eyes' to those at home. Other, mainly international, students told how, through experiencing other cultures, they also came to appreciate their own cultures, which they would not otherwise have done, or they came to see how they were viewed through the eyes of others.

*And while talking to them [students from different countries] I think I began to find something about my own country because if you stay with the same people from your own country then you won't think these things are such a different from other countries. There are some good and bad points. And I've learnt to treasure a lot of my culture.* (Jane, Int (UK), IV, H, 23.02.10)

*And I think you think about Britain as well because you can see Britain from other people's perspectives.* (Serena, UK, IV, H, 28.04.09)

Other students described a tangible shift in their behaviours and identities through experience of others.

*Their nationalities influence how we behave around them but I think I've learnt a lot from them as well. I do behave differently. I would be more relaxed and probably let go of myself more, because with Malaysian we have to be careful not to offend. But I find that the British don't take offence too easily; they are just really outgoing and they just take us as they see us.*

(Wen Peng, MC, IV, M, 08.03.10)

*Obviously there are different clashes between cultures but you just make yourself how you can manage to form relationships and, you know, bend or stretch the bits that you might have.*

(Soraya, UK, III, H, 02.12.08)

The students above had been able to expand their identities as they adapted to the cultural (and language) differences around them and developed their capability for *Enquiry and Reflection*. This was enabled through their functioning with *Social Relations and Participation*

We see how the challenge to students' own position, which has the potential for bringing about the development of their self or identity, might come through an internationalised higher education experience (Erichsen 2011; Gill 2007; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Koehne 2006). These students were developing their narrative imagination (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002) as they became able to see and consider, through the contrasts of others, aspects of their own lives and cultures, hitherto unrealised. Students could be seen as operating in the 'in between' or 'third space' (Bhabha 1994) as they recreated and redefined their own cultures and identities and more cosmopolitan selves through their multicultural experiences with each other.

It was a minority of students (the 5 'high' ranking students) who described in depth the feelings and personal development stimulated through their intercultural experiences and close friendships. However those who did had been able to develop the capability of *Enquiry and Reflection* considerably and could see the value in what they had gained. These students had undergone a transformation of self as they sought to learn from and about others, revealed their lives to others and as a result reconsidered their own situations. They demonstrated that a more cosmopolitan outlook can result from an internationalised higher education experience as, through exploring difference, they also found the common humanity of their friendships.

## **5.6 Overall Extent and Patterning of Capability**

For each capability discussed above I have indicated the overall range among the students. What this has not shown is the pattern within the different groups of students, now illustrated in Table 5.6.



Table 5.6 Ranking of Capability by Student Group

Student Group	Number of 'High' overall	Number of 'Medium' overall	Number of 'Low' overall
UK	10	28	21
International (not MC)	9	19	0
Malaysia Campus (interviewed in year 4 <sup>30</sup> )	5	28	21
Malaysia Campus (interviewed in year 3 only)	0	13	23
Total	24	88	64

Although this chapter has shown the benefits to be gained through developing and functioning with intercultural capabilities, the presence of high level of capability featured the least. It might therefore be a relatively small proportion of students in who are able to capitalise fully on the opportunities offered by internationalised higher education. A ranking of medium capability occurred most frequently, indicating that through exposure to difference, many students do develop a degree of intercultural capability, though there remains some unfilled potential. However there were significantly more students with low than high rankings. It was particularly noticeable that the Malaysia Campus students, whom I had not had the opportunity to interview in their fourth year, appeared to have the lowest levels of intercultural capability. This supports findings that capability accrues over time and, had I been able to interview them the following year, a different picture might have emerged within this group. These students appeared largely unable to function sufficiently with *Social Relations and Participation*, through interplay of personal and social factors, lessening opportunity for functioning and development of other intercultural capabilities.

### **5.7 Conclusion: Developing Intercultural Capability through Internationalised Higher Education**

This chapter has illuminated the broad spectrum of intercultural mixing that appears to exist amongst the pharmacy students interviewed. The picture portrayed by the students appeared to be highly varied in terms of their intercultural relationships. The capability set proved to be a good descriptor of the capabilities required for a more cosmopolitan outlook and a means of evaluating students' intercultural capabilities and, on the whole, the accounts of student experiences and behaviours could be mapped onto the framework as illustrated in Table 5.1.

The population of students whom I interviewed reflected a spectrum of intercultural capability, with respect to the extent and type of intercultural

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<sup>30</sup> This group includes students interviewed in year 4 only or in years 3 and 4.

capabilities displayed and the opportunities for functioning. While the overall distribution of capabilities across the student group was similar for three of the capabilities (although there was individual variation amongst the students), a different, higher pattern was seen for *Mind and Imagination*, indicating the extent to which students had been exposed to and engaged with the difference, present within the international environment of the university. The most frequent ranking of students was with a medium degree of capability. These students had benefited from the opportunities afforded by studying in an internationalised environment, demonstrating the potential that exists, but also that there could be more to be gained. Significantly more students ranked low than high, demonstrating the gap that might exist for many between the expectations and reality of international higher education.

Some students were able to develop and function with their intercultural capabilities to a significant extent, and students who exhibited high capability in one area were more likely to have greater capability in others. The possession of a high level of capability across the board was often accompanied by a high level of functioning with *Social Relations and Participation*, which provided the foundation for relationships. Through their willingness to engage with difference, highly functioning students found personal fulfilment and enjoyment and also, through their recognition of common humanity amongst others, enabled capability development in fellow students. The presence of well-developed intercultural capabilities was a good indicator of being likely to hold a cosmopolitan outlook

Conversely, other students were less able to develop their intercultural capabilities, either because of their initial capabilities and/or the circumstances in which they found themselves. Although a multiplicity of personal, social and environmental factors affect capability development and functioning, the presence or absence of capability in others appeared to play a significant role in enabling or stifling functioning for these students.

Overall, the majority of students had experienced and benefitted from intercultural relationships, albeit to different degrees. The extent of opportunity to form intercultural relationships appeared to underpin overall intercultural capability development. International students on the whole, appeared more sensitive to opportunities for developing their intercultural capability; to be expected, given that they are studying in a different country so some elements of their life in the UK are inescapably foreign. Although some described very rich intercultural experiences there was also some disappointment, particularly relating to lack of mixing within the academic environment. Although some UK students clearly relished being in an international environment, for most the exposure to different cultures was almost a by-product of their education - not expected or sought, but enjoyable and useful nonetheless. For a very few UK students, the realisation of being in an international environment appeared to have almost passed them by, as they remained in their own close cultural circle of friends. However for the students who had formed deeper intercultural relationships, the overall benefits were

clearly articulated, in terms of their friendships, enjoyment, challenges, learning about themselves and other cultures, and preparation for their future careers and lives. Some of these students had undergone a transformation of identity and were living something of a cosmopolitan educational and social experience.

Despite the opportunities presented, the data reveals that interculturality is not spontaneous. Intercultural sensitivity and capability appeared to be inherently present in some students to a greater degree than in others – notably in those who had previous intercultural experience, being of mixed cultural heritage or older. Although something which can be learned, intercultural capability is not usually achieved without effort. The data showed that a degree of courage was necessary in order to step out of one's comfort zone and expose oneself to potential discomfort and difficulties – but that students recognised the ultimate value in being able to do so.

The international environment in which students study and live has thus been confirmed to provide potential as a space in which students can use and develop their intercultural capabilities, not only for the present time but also for the future, as they embark upon their careers and lives after graduation. It is a dynamic environment in which students can be challenged, through their experiences of and with others, to develop more cosmopolitan-aware selves with a greater awareness of and concern for the lives and well-being of others. Examination of the data against the capability set has shown that lower levels of intercultural capability persists in some students, which is something to be addressed through higher education because, as future citizens and as future pharmacists, there is benefit and value in promoting cosmopolitan and human values in one's life and work.

Having shown the overall pattern of intercultural capability that exists within the population of students I studied, the next chapter takes the example of four individual student cases, to illustrate some of the effects upon the individual of possessing high or low capability.

## Chapter 6

### Intercultural Capability Development

#### 6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I used the capability framework as a device to evaluate the extent and patterning of students' intercultural capability. The chapter demonstrated the variability in functioning within students' intercultural relationships and learning, influenced by the effort required; prior intercultural background and experiences; and the environment in which students find themselves. At one end of the spectrum which I described and analysed are students for whom the internationalised educational experience is primarily transformative and enriching; for students at the other end there are elements of disempowerment and limited social capability. The significant number of students judged as having medium intercultural capability have benefited to an extent, though still represent an element of lost opportunity.

In this chapter I use the cases of four students in order to examine more closely some of the personal and circumstantial factors involved in the possession and development of intercultural capabilities and how this can affect the individual. As described in Chapter 4, I have selected 'extreme cases' from ends of the spectrum in order to investigate factors which might have contributed to such different outcomes in students exposed to the same MPharm course and general university environment. Using Table 5.1 (from Chapter 5, p83), which showed the mapping of capabilities for each student against the framework, I have selected students on the basis of their degree of capability. I will present the cases of UK and Malaysia students at each extreme<sup>31</sup> in order to compare and contrast home and international students with quite different perceptions and intercultural experiences, analysing their accounts with respect to the factors which might influence capability development.

The first two students, Pei Ann (Malaysian) and Soraya (British), I judged relatively highly interculturally capable. The accounts show how their intercultural capabilities had expanded during their time at university. Through reflection about difference, they had expanded their world-view and experienced a positive change in their selves. The second two students, Wee Ting (Malaysian) and Samantha (British), are both at the low end of the framework. Their experiences served to inhibit intercultural capability development and in Wee Ting we see how her agency, identity and sense of self were constrained. Their accounts illustrate why some students are less able to develop interculturally and how, despite being in a highly internationalised course and university, they were unable to engage with a multicultural environment and capitalise upon its potential.

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<sup>31</sup> No Malaysia Campus students were judged to be high for all capabilities, so I have chosen a student with medium and high capabilities.

Both the Malaysia Campus students participated in the pilot interviews which informed the main study. Pilot data was not included in the capability mapping described in the previous chapter, but was included in this chapter in order to build up a fuller picture of the individual students.

The sub-headings within the accounts reflect the main themes that arose from the data for each of the students.

## 6.2 Pei Ann

Pei Ann was of Chinese ethnic origin, from a small town in Malaysia. I interviewed her twice. The first time was as part of the pilot study between years two and three, during an 8 week work placement with a UK national community pharmacy company. The second time was during her final semester in the fourth year.

Pei Ann's range on the spectrum of intercultural capability (from Table 5.1) is shown below:

Social Relations and Participation	Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Mind and Imagination	Enquiry and Reflection
H	M	M	M

This account demonstrates how Pei Ann, as an international student, was able to expand her intercultural capabilities considerably. Initially displaying considerable capability for *Social Relations and Participation*, she had the desire and confidence to interact with others, enabling her to get to know them as individuals. Despite initial frictions caused through difference, her effort and functioning with *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* allowed her to be open-minded and not dismissive of difference. Functioning with *Mind and Imagination* she was reflective about differences, coming to recognise common ground and potential for compromise.

### 6.2.1 Friendships

The desire and ability to interact with others, in particular outside of one's comfort zone, embodies the capability of *Social Relations and Participation*. This section illustrates how Pei Ann, through engaging with others *via* a number of different routes, flourished in terms of this capability.

Pei Ann came across as confident, gregarious and well-liked. At the Malaysia Campus, Pei Ann knew the majority of her (37) class-mates reasonably well, including a smaller, closer group of friends, some of whom she now shared accommodation with in the UK. These remained her closest friends throughout the course, but Pei Ann had also made other friendships with students of a range of nationalities, including British. She had not only the desire but also the confidence and ability to make friendships more widely. Complementary to this, she spoke competent English which, combined with her confidence and

friendliness, would have facilitated interactions with native English speakers (Dunne 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Montgomery 2010; Peacock and Harrison 2009; Volet and Ang 1998).

Pei Ann said she preferred not to remain exclusively with one group, but spend time with different friends. Pre-disposed to forming a range of friendships, she saw that exclusive group formation was often the norm and described with some displeasure how, even in the first year, within a smaller group of predominantly Malaysian students, cliques formed based on ethnicity and language<sup>32</sup>. While remaining close to her Malaysian friends, Pei Ann told me with pleasure about the good friendships she had made with students of a range of nationalities in the UK.

*There's Egyptians, there's a girl from Kenya, Thailand – yeah quite a number of Thai's - Canadian and a couple of local English. There's a real mix.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

*I do mix around with people who are not in my university group – we have become fast friends.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Though her social activities outside the course remained mainly with her Malaysian friends, Pei Ann enjoyed the close company of a range of pharmacy students. The nature of her friendships with different groups of students differed and Pei Ann's situation illustrates how social activities tend to be with friends of similar culture, usually because of greater likelihood of having more similar interests and social needs (Coles and Swami 2012; Dunne 2009; Schweisfurth and Gu 2009; Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006).

*I would still say that most of my time will be spent with the friends that I made with the Malaysia Campus students. I suppose that's only normal because we have built a two year friendship and stuff like that. I think most of the time we will hang out together whether a party or just having dinner or lunch together. But my experience with the UK campus students is slightly different as it's based mainly in the university.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Pei Ann was extremely positive about the opportunity that group work had provided to make friends, saying: 'Group work was the starting point for our friendships in the sense that if it wasn't for group work I wouldn't have met them.' It had provided the basis upon which Pei Ann – and presumably also her fellow group members – had functioned with the capability of *Social Relations and Participation*, as they formed good friendships, which continued after completion of the group work. Pei Ann had also formed UK friendships through being a member of the Staff-Student Committee. In both these situations, students had come together through a common purpose, also functioning with *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* as they respected and valued one another's contributions.

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<sup>32</sup> There are three main ethnic groups in Malaysia: Malay, Chinese and Indian.

The other main source of intercultural friendships in the UK was Pei Ann's undergraduate project group. Having spent the previous summer working in a School of Pharmacy research laboratory, Pei Ann was continuing this work. It confirmed the interest in research that she had from the start of the course and was likely to provide the source of post-graduate study within the School. Working closely with the project team, she had made what she described as good friends and regularly enjoyed lunches and after-work drinks with them.

*We [the project team] sort of have drinks together and stuff. So I actually mix around with them quite often.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

The commentary above illustrates how Pei Ann had expanded her capability and functioning with *Social Relations and Participation* through her active involvement and relationships with other students. The value of possessing some initial capability was evident, as the desire to mix with others, combined with confidence, enabled Pei Ann to maximise her relationships, friendships and participation.

### **6.2.2 From Difference to Commonality**

Finding herself confronted by social and cultural contrasts and clashes, I discuss here how Pei Ann, through her intercultural capabilities, was able to reflect upon and accommodate difference. Although initially experiencing some difficulties because of how these contrasts made her feel, Pei Ann was developing her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection* as she reflected upon the different values and practices she encountered. I show later how this capability enabled her to reconcile and come to terms with some of these observations.

Undertaking an international education was important to Pei Ann, through her family upbringing. Having family members who had studied abroad, she was instilled with the expectation and desire to meet people of different countries, races and beliefs at university. Her approach though, didn't appear to be based on duty - on a family expectation or feeling that she ought to interact - but rather upon a genuine desire to interact with others, illustrating how prior attitudes, beliefs and values can have a significant bearing upon the gaining of intercultural capability (Byram 1997; Harrison and Peacock 2010):

*For me it [being in an international environment] is very important but that is probably because of my upbringing and my family. Most of my cousins have gone overseas and my brother personally wanted me to be educated in the United States. They made it sound exciting and different and something that I wanted to experience myself so, in that sense, throughout my entire childhood I always had the mentality that yes, eventually at university I will be meeting people from different countries and of different races and different beliefs.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Pei Ann was, then, already open to being exposed to difference. Yet when she arrived in the UK she was challenged by some marked differences between people's attitudes and behaviours in the UK and in Malaysia. This included her experience of UK society in general, which began during her pharmacy placement, and the students she met at university, which added to the difficulties of adjusting to life in a different country. When I spoke to Pei Ann during her pre-year three placement she told me how, much as she was made to feel welcome within the pharmacy, she found English people 'a bit cold' and while people, in general, were superficially polite, she thought they were less genuine and caring than people in Malaysian society. For example, Pei Ann was struck and saddened by the apparent lack of care and respect offered to elderly people, of whom, she saw, there were many and who, although independent, were on their own.

*Sometimes it makes me sad, especially on a rainy day, you know, and you just see them [elderly people] walking down the street – alone. Like, on my way back from work when it was raining, there was a lady who was carrying her shopping bags with both hands, so I shared my umbrella with her. She was so thankful.* (1st interview)

She described a lack of friendliness amongst the population in general towards each other, despite their use of pleasantries, polite language and terms of endearment.

At one point in the interview I used the word 'multicultural' with reference to the university environment. This provoked a vehement response from Pei Ann (shown in the quotation below) because she defined the term as mutual understanding between cultures. She had been somewhat taken aback and disillusioned to discover that, despite the claim of the UK to be a multicultural country, in her view, it was not. She contrasted the reality of UK cultures living alongside but not with each other with her experience of life in Malaysia, where friends from different cultures would know something of each other's practices and beliefs and would share in each other's festivals<sup>33</sup>. This was brought starkly into perspective when she and her friends had to work in the lab on Chinese New Year, with little understanding of the impact of this, or indeed of the festival, from people around her.

*In Malaysia when we mention 'multicultural' we truly experience each other's culture and we celebrate each of our races' big festivals – it's a public holiday in Malaysia. And what I realised is that in the UK, when I first came over, they kept talking about multicultural and how they are starting to respect this culture and that interface, but there was still the lack of understanding each other's culture and yet they claimed to be multicultural. So it was very different to how it was in Malaysia. As in, when my Indian friends were celebrating their New Year I would actually visit them and celebrate with them*

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<sup>33</sup> Although history has created inequalities between the main Malaysian ethnic groups, which persist, there is some mutual understanding and celebration of each other's cultures and cultural and religious festivals.



*and truly experience so I know what's going on. But the most recent one in the UK was Chinese New Year and hardly anyone knew why we were celebrating Chinese New Year or how we celebrate it, and it was really odd actually in my third year that I actually had a lab on Chinese New Year day so it felt really funny. I felt really weird using the word 'multicultural' in the UK at first.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

The lack of a multiculturally appreciative environment in the UK was potentially acting to constrain Pei Ann's functioning with *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, as students around her did not recognise her festival or her inability to celebrate as she wished. Pei Ann saw that she was instead in an international environment, in which people wouldn't naturally understand about each other.

*'International' would have made me give a very different response. If it was international I expect people not to understand my background and where I come from because I'm basically a foreigner coming to a foreign place and it's only natural, in my opinion, that people wouldn't know about me and I wouldn't know about them.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

However, this environment provided the basis for the mutual friendship and understanding that Pei Ann sought and found, despite the differences, difficulties and frustrations she experienced. Another source of surprise – and frustration - was the relative priorities that Pei Ann saw that students gave to social and work aspects of their lives. She was used to being in an environment of conscientious students and, like some international students in other studies, felt that many UK campus students displayed insufficient commitment to their work (Schweisfurth and Gu 2009; Volet and Ang 1998).

*If I was in Malaysia and I was in a university most of the people will put education first - no matter what, I am going to score really well. That was the first priority. When I came over to the UK, most of the people in the UK campus think that they are going to have the time of their lives in university – they are going to study hard and play hard. But I would say that it's more like 65% play hard than study hard.*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

When these behaviours and attitudes interfered with academic group work it caused annoyance: 'For the first time in my university life I experienced people who were not willing to work and they sort of put pubbing first before work and that really annoyed me.'

Pei Ann was similarly frustrated by the attitude taken by some students about the drinking of alcohol, the lack of sensitivity to those who did not drink (or not to the same extent) and the inherent barrier that it caused to social mixing outside of the course – as well as to conversation, which often revolved around social activities and drinking.

*I notice in UK a lot of activities seem to involve a lot of alcohol. In Malaysia as you can imagine.... a lot of activities wouldn't involve alcohol so that was the biggest difference. What I found really hard at first was that the UK campus students couldn't accept the idea that we don't drink or even if we drink it's not to the same extent that they do.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Her capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* was being constricted as she felt that her choice not to drink alcohol was not respected by others. Yet despite these difficulties, and the initial inward struggles in dealing with them, Pei Ann appeared to hold an attitude of finding compromise and common ground through seeing the positive elements of her experiences.

*Being in the university you meet so many different people, because meeting people they help you in so many different ways and you learn so many things.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

*You can't really appreciate other cultures if you're not willing to mix.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Despite her frustrations, Pei Ann's continued efforts not to be dismissive of others enabled her to see the ultimate value of engaging with difference. She had gained some understanding of others and could see the benefit of this for the future. Her capability for *Mind and Imagination* enabled her to adopt a cosmopolitan attitude – one which might influence her interactions with others after university.

*If you're working within a group that comprises people from different nations I think that promotes an understanding and there is a drive to promote that understanding between all these individuals, because we need to achieve a single goal – it might be to reach some targets or whatever - and we have to speak to each other and we have to work with each other.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

*It [the international environment] sort of helped me develop my skills in adapting to different situations in life. It's a bit like having a 'mock' for life. It helps prepare us for working with people from different cultures. You have to modify your behaviour to be adaptable.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Within the university environment, Pei Ann sought compromise and common ground rather than accepting divisions caused through difference. She felt that her experience had helped her adapt to different situations and learn to understand different people; her capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* enabled her to recognise difference but also, through gaining an understanding of others, to accept difference.

Reflecting on her time at university, and particularly in the UK, Pei Ann described having become used to discussing points of view and forming opinions, which had challenged her practice and thinking. Using the capability of *Mind and Imagination* she had engaged in discussion and debate and been

provoked to explore disagreement and new points of view. She realised how her way of thinking had changed.

*Some of the things I realised – my opinions can be really - well I suppose in Malaysia things are still rather conservative and if your actions are rather radical, or you're taught they're rather radical, it is not accepted or it's a cause of conflict. But, I suppose, after my university experience although I do know that there might be a chance of conflict I still will insist on my point, make my point known.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Developing her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection*, Pei Ann critically reflected upon the way she formed opinions, as learnt through her upbringing in Malaysia, causing her to realise how she had changed in this respect. This encompasses some of the notion of the 'examined life' (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002) as Pei Ann realised the value in having and being able to express her own considered opinions.

Getting to know people as individuals provoked Pei Ann to conclude that some of her initial impressions about difference might have been wrong. She now realised that there are many similarities, if you choose to see them (Schweisfurth and Gu 2009) and her behaviour and attitude would have been likely to engender willingness in the people with whom she interacted, so expanding *their* opportunity and potential for capability development. For example, some of Pei Ann's initial impressions of the stark differences between UK campus students and herself (regarding priorities of social activities and work) had mellowed by the end of the fourth year.

*Because it's my second year here and I've met a lot more people, gotten to know them personally, I think it's basically the same really - the same attitude to life. All of us want to have fun and all of us want to work hard; it's just the way [we do it].* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Yet Pei Ann's point of reference might also have shifted as, functioning with *Enquiry and Reflection*, she had undergone an attitudinal change through her intercultural experiences. We see this in her talk about having changed and developed whilst at university and adapted to the English culture during her time in the UK. She would have acculturated to UK practice to an extent. Therefore the observations made and views that she held initially might be tempered by a change, albeit not fully conscious, in her own stance. She now took the attitude that it was a matter of trying to find the similarities and building upon those.

*I'm almost at the end of the course and I'm almost two years here and I do realise that there are a lot of things, a lot of similarities in the culture if you want to view it that way. Of course there are many people who still feel very strongly saying 'Oh no it's very different, drinking alcohol and all' and they say there are no similarities. But I suppose I've just come to an understanding that we are really the same people - kind of different but basically the same.*

*It's sort of the same thing in the sense that we will go off to a roadside store and have tea. It's just that in an English environment you do it in a pub and drink alcohol and in a sense I think we can just find a common ground.*

*(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)*

Pei Ann was displaying something of the 'examined life' and 'narrative imagination' (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002) as she reflectively compared her own and others' situations. Although she had found a dissonance between some of her expectations and the reality of British university and life, she did not allow her initial disappointment and frustration to stifle her open-mindedness and willingness to explore disagreement (*Mind and Imagination*), which allowed her to achieve a more accepting, participatory and cosmopolitan self.

Pei Ann's UK student experience was her first time overseas and, although things had not always been easy, she spoke with relish during her fourth year interview about how she had enjoyed and gained from the course at Malaysia Campus and in the UK. From having been terribly homesick during her first semester in Malaysia, she had coped with being at university, transferring to the UK for her first time overseas, had made many good friends and was obviously proud of her achievements and grateful for the experience. Her parting comment was:

*I have truly, truly enjoyed my four years studying here. It was a unique experience – first the two years in the Malaysia Campus; the coming over bit; getting used to this place bit and struggling through the course after that. It was very challenging but highly rewarding in the sense that I did achieve quite a number of things I want to achieve in the university. I'm lost for words!*

*(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)*

Although initially relatively interculturally capable, within the international educational environment Pei Ann had overcome frustration, had her views challenged, actively engaged with difference and gained interest and enjoyment through her intercultural friendships.

### **6.2.3 Summary of Pei Ann**

The internationalised environment, in particular the pharmacy course, provided Pei Ann with opportunity for friendships and learning with others who were different. The intercultural capabilities that Pei Ann possessed were complementary to each other. Her capability for *Social Relations and Participation* allowed her to interact with others, to see past the group level to the individual, where she enjoyed the company of others who were culturally dissimilar to her. Holding an initial expectation and desire of meeting those from different cultures through her education, Pei Ann was able to fulfil this through taking the opportunities offered. Experiencing cultural difference and clashes, she did not accept division, but made efforts to understand others, enabling her to see common humanity amongst people, so becoming more

interculturally capable and resulting in a tangible adaptation and expansion of her self. Her intercultural capabilities and self are likely to contribute to her professional and personal role in society as she enacts her cosmopolitan values, simultaneously enabling capability in others.

### 6.3 Soraya

Soraya was a British student, from a large Pakistani family, and was Muslim. I interviewed her twice as part of the main study: during the first semester of her third year and second semester of her fourth year.

Soraya's range on the spectrum of intercultural capability (from Table 5.1) is shown below:

Social Relations and Participation	Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Mind and Imagination	Enquiry and Reflection
H	H	H	H

Soraya's account illustrates how a UK student had capitalised upon the internationalised environment in which she found herself. Using and expanding her capability for *Social Relations and Participation*, she formed a range of friendships and was challenged and stimulated through her engagement with others. We see how Soraya's religion, which was central within her life, was a source of commonality within her friendships, but also acted as a stepping stone to making intercultural friendships and stimulating discussions about culture. She developed considerably her capabilities of *Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection* and a more cosmopolitan self as she learnt about the lives, beliefs and practices of others and reflectively compared her own.

#### 6.3.1 Intercultural Interactions

Soraya had been surprised on coming to university to find a relatively large proportion of students from many different countries. She spoke effusively about having been inspired and challenged through her interactions with students from different countries and cultures. This section shows how this had awakened an interest and desire to find out about others and their worlds; had provoked a marked development in many aspects of her intercultural capability and expanded her world-view.

Within the academic environment Soraya had friends of different nationalities, made primarily through working together in laboratory classes. One of her close friends was from Hong Kong, through whom she had made friends with other Hong Kong students:

*[Name] is one of my good friends and is from Hong Kong. For the first two years we had labs together so we got to know each other quite well and we worked really well together.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

Soraya was part of a lively laboratory group of students who were of mixed nationality and religion.

*There's one Bengali guy, one Indian girl, there's one I think he's British but he's got Egyptian background and there's [name] who's from Hong Kong. Then we have two Iranian and one or two originally from Pakistan, born here – no, one born somewhere else.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

They appeared to get on well and spent a considerable amount of time in the lab discussing culture and religion. Soraya described, with evident enjoyment, how conversations included discussions of similarities and differences in cultures, of religions and religious practices and the opinions of the various group members.

*Because I have Indian roots, and one of the members of the group, she's Indian, so we have a bit of overlap in our cultures, well quite a lot of overlap - and even with the Bengali guy. But we have differences as well and we like to discuss the differences, you know. I think six of us are actually Muslim in the group of 7 or 8, or 9, maybe 10 so the rest of 'em have a lot of questions about our religion as well. And even some of the less, like, practising Muslims have a lot of questions for me as well. So we sort of – we discuss religion a lot, culture and how it's mixed with religion.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

Facilitated by *Social Relations and Participation*, Soraya was expanding her capabilities across the board as she was shown respect and showed respect for others and their beliefs and points of view (*Respect, Dignity and Recognition*); engaged in debate and discussion about others (*Mind and Imagination*) and found pleasure in actively exploring other perspectives and experiences (*Enquiry and Reflection*).

Through the interviews, Soraya gave the impression that she had some clear views about her religion, and particularly how it was connected to or separate from what she termed 'culture'. Later in the interview she interpreted culture as implying 'different countries and different backgrounds, upbringing, religion'. However in earlier discussions she implied that culture was based on nationality or ethnicity. She enjoyed discussing her religion with others and intimated that she understood quite a bit about it, unlike some of the other students who were 'less practising Muslims', and who asked her (as the expert) questions about their religion. She was at pains to clarify to other students how, in her view, religion and religious issues were separate from those stemming from the (Indian) culture.

*They're two very different things and you need to appreciate them differently. So that's always a debate, especially within the non-practising Muslims because they have a very, erm, mixed idea of culture and religion from their parents and because I know a lot more about religion than they might do. I thought, 'No you're mixing it again, you know, you need to separate this out'.*

*So we're always discussing it. They're like, 'Really, I thought that was a religious thing' and I'm, 'No, that's like part of the culture'. (1<sup>st</sup> interview)*

Soraya discussed how wearing the hijab sparked interest and conversations. She said 'It's nice to educate other people'. These conversations helped her to think differently about other people, through hearing about the misunderstandings and assumptions that other students might have had. She suggested that international students were more likely than UK students to ask her about the practice of wearing a headscarf. She thought there was a different degree of interest and curiosity about it amongst different groups of students.

*I think certain groups of people – the British people that I've met that are from here – are less likely to ask than the international people. I don't know whether that's because the international students have more awareness of different people or whether they are just more curious but I felt like international students have more of an interest. (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)*

This might be so. However it might also reflect differences in what students feel able to ask, or what are considered appropriate questions in different cultures. For example, some British students I interviewed discussed how inhibited they felt about asking direct questions about religion or culture, because of the risk of causing awkwardness or offence. Yet Soraya indicated how she welcomed the questions and conversations; she would not have felt awkward or offended.

Soraya's interest and enjoyment of cultures extended into her social life. She derived pleasure from learning about other people and their backgrounds and also telling others about hers. In her third year interview she talked about how inspirational she found the multicultural university environment, being able to interact with so many different and varied people.

*I meet people from very rich backgrounds and it makes me feel like I want a taste of their background as well, and I want to learn from them as well. And I meet a lot of people from different cultures and I want to learn about them. (1<sup>st</sup> interview)*

Soraya had not expected her university experience to have such an impact upon her outlook. Besides deriving pleasure from interactions with international students, Soraya had been personally challenged in terms of her own views and life journey. For example she told me about meeting students whose path to university had been more difficult because of their countries and circumstances. It led her to see her own background and upbringing as privileged in comparison. A marked development in her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection* was evident:

*I know some people, like some of my Malaysian friends or some of my Chinese friends, they've had it a lot harder in their countries – they've had to work a*

*lot harder than me and that makes me feel really grateful and makes me maybe want to study harder because - I just feel like - you just sort of appreciate what they've been through and what different cultures have to go through to get to this stage. I think we have it a lot easier here.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

At the same time, she appreciated the 'wealth of life experience' that some of these students might have experienced, despite the difficulties.

Soraya's openness to cultural differences might have been influenced by being of mixed heritage, as a British Pakistani. Though perhaps unrecognised by Soraya, her background and upbringing might have caused her to be more sensitive and tolerant of differences - to be more interculturally capable (Byram 1997; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Marginson 2009).

We can see, as in the account of Pei Ann, how Soraya's capabilities were complementary and mutually beneficial. Being able to interact and make friends with others, whether in a social or academic context (the capability of *Social Relations and Participation*) was the basis for development of other capabilities. It was through her interactions and friendships that Soraya was stimulated and inspired to develop a range of intercultural capabilities and to recognise for herself the pleasure and value of this. The development of her 'narrative imagination' (Nussbaum 1997; Nussbaum 2002) was also apparent as she reflected upon her own life in comparison with the situations of others. She had expanded her horizons as she encountered a desire to understand and learn more about and from other's situations and worlds, including through travel.

### **6.3.2 Friendships and Commonality**

Wide though her interactions were, we see in Soraya the importance and influence of commonality (of ethnicity and religion) in her relationships. Commonality, by providing a route to friendships, also provided the opportunity to encounter and explore difference. Although her pharmacy friendship group included two students from Hong Kong and, by the third and fourth year, from Malaysia, her closest friends were from a similar cultural and ethnic background: 'Most of them are home students; most of them are Pakistanis, like me.'

Soraya discussed how her Indian roots provided a connection with students who were from different countries, but also of Indian ethnicity. For example, she described the overlap between her own culture, of other Indian students within her lab group, and of Indian Malaysian students on the course. She evidently found the discussion and exploration of similarities and differences of great interest, including the notion of having a similar ethnicity, but a highly different culture through upbringing. The presence of students with Indian ethnicity but from different countries and cultures seemed to have stimulated an exploration of Soraya's own cultural background. Although Soraya was



British, therefore of a different nationality than many of these other students, they were all bound by their similar non-British, Indian ethnicity.

*We're all part of the Indian culture – Pakistani, Indian, Bengali – so we all have similarities there.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

*One of the Indian Malaysians has got a similar background to me, but then again she's had a very different culture and upbringing in Malaysia so that's really interesting.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

*The Indian students - the Indian students from the UK and the international students, they can mix quite well.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

Commonality of ethnic background was therefore seen as an important factor in friendship formation generally. Soraya also described examples of how this applied to other student friendship groups. However she saw that nationality could still be a stronger tie than ethnicity, that nationality was deep-seated and not easy to change or override, and that the home and international students still tended to group separately. Even though Soraya evidently gravitated towards or was more aware of students who had an Indian heritage, like herself, she had at the same time been observant and reflective of differences between them, as she developed her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection*.

Religion was also an influential factor within Soraya's life. The main source of her wide circle of friends outside of the course was through the Islamic Society and its associated clubs and activities. She had made different groups of friends, although many of them knew each other through this common link. Soraya herself identified the importance of this when she said that 'because most of my friends are Muslims we have things in common'. Religion, as the common factor, had provided the basis for friendships with students of different nationalities and cultures.

The comfort factor was mentioned by Soraya as being a feature of friendships, particularly in terms of breaking out of comfortable friendship groups to include others – a component of *Social Relations and Participation*. As shown in the quotation below, to do this was not without effort. Observing a lack of initial interactions between the Malaysia Campus students and UK-based students, Soraya criticised the latter for not welcoming the students from Malaysia.

*I think that because there's a lot more of them and with everybody sort of in their friendship groups and I guess not willing to make an effort to get to know more people - 'cos they're already very comfortable in their own comfort zone - I guess a lot of people don't make the effort.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

Some of this ability to feel comfortable came through familiarity and, closely linked was Soraya's reference to the fact that interacting and communicating on an intercultural level takes effort and practice. She had got to know some of

the Malaysia Campus students during the third year, partly through her friend who had studied at the Malaysia Campus during her second year, and now felt confident and comfortable to approach students who were Malaysian in a way that she would previously not have done.

*This year I've been in contact especially, like, with the Malaysians – with the Malaysian students coming in and then I've got some friends, some Malaysian friends outside the university so I've got to know them, a lot more and about their language. Now I'm confident enough to go up to a Malaysian person if I know, if I can sort of tell they're from Malaysia I'm more likely to go up to them and talk to them because I know more about their background....I feel more comfortable talking to them and I can say, you know, I have some Malaysian friends I want to introduce you to. I do a lot of that now.*

*(1<sup>st</sup> interview)*

Through having made initial contacts and effort to get to know the Malaysian students, Soraya had become further empowered to approach and form friendships with other (Malaysian) students. Making the initial effort paid dividends in expanding her capability of *Social Relations and Participation* and enhancing her friendships. In the previous chapter I described the difficulties encountered by the Malaysia Campus students in interacting with the UK students, so Soraya's functioning in this respect would importantly have enabled agency and capability in the students she had befriended. It is also likely that this enhanced ability to engage actively with others would be carried into her working and personal relationships after university.

The final example of commonality in this section is commonality of purpose. This was identified when talking about the extent of integration between the students from the two campuses. Coming across each other in the library while revising had led to friendship and mutual support, irrespective of their usual groupings.

*I spend a lot of time in the library two or three weeks just before the exams and there'd be a lot of pharmacists there and everybody was friendly. You might never have spoken to that person before but you might go and have something to eat [together]. I think we are quite willing to help each other out and we work well together.*

*(2<sup>nd</sup> interview)*

This chimes with Pei Ann's experience of common purpose through group work and committee activities acting as a stimulus for getting to know each other. The capability of *Social Relations and Participation* enabled working with, so getting to know others, enabling opportunities for development of other intercultural capabilities.

### **6.3.3 Development of the Personal and Professional Self**

Soraya referred repeatedly to aspects of her life as involving 'learning'. I was struck by the extent to which Soraya mentioned the influence of other people

in her life and upon her self-development. She had been inspired by others or provoked to think about how she or her situation stood in comparison. She appeared to see this process of observing and reflecting about others as a constant process of learning and self-development. Soraya's cultural and self-awareness was evident and we can see how, during her time at university, she exercised and developed her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection*.

For example, Soraya offered that her friendships were also a source of learning from others.

*Being with them [different friends], learning from them.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

*I can learn from other people you know. Like my house mates always say that they think I'm a really calm person and they wish that nobody ever takes that away from me, 'cos they really like that about you. But then there's other traits that I really like about them and that I'd like to have myself – and so you learn about what you're deficient in and what you could actually build yourself up to.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

*Being with different people you learn different things every day and find things out. You realise that there is not just one way of dealing with a situation and there are a lot of things to consider. But you learn to realise what's right and wrong and when you should stick up for your rights or when it's not worth it.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Soraya had been challenged to consider her views and opinions, on both personal and professional levels. As discussed above in section 6.3.1, having found herself in a more international university environment than expected, Soraya had been inspired to want to learn about others, their countries and cultures and, in so doing, had been challenged to think about her position relative to others. She talked about realising that people thought about things in different ways and the importance of trying to understand what mattered to different people. She tried not to stereotype some people until she had made the effort to understand what they were like on a personal level - reflecting one of the qualities of being a 'world citizen' (Nussbaum 1997).

*I did have a few...stereotypes about certain groups of people, but the only way to beat that is to go and make friends and learn everything about them, and think 'No actually it isn't how I thought it would be or how everybody thinks it is'.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Again her narrative imagination and capability for *Mind and Imagination* come into play as she saw the potential effect of her own and other's views and behaviours upon each other. To confront these stereotypical views necessitated effort on her part and might have been personally challenging, particularly if she was rejecting the common opinions held by her peers. She acknowledged that there were difficulties, but was willing to be flexible.

Soraya recognised the necessity for pharmacists to be able to make informed judgements and to hold considered opinions on possible contentious issues. She had learnt that there are different and, at times, uncomfortable and conflicting factors which make up the wider picture and that 'You have to agree to disagree sometimes'. In her fourth year interview Soraya appeared more confident, and she offered how she had developed both socially and academically during her time at university. She talked of having become a more rounded person, more able to look at other points of view and think 'outside the box', having learnt to form her own opinions and deal with unexpected situations.

She felt that she was learning to 'face reality' and her conversations were more focussed on thoughts of her career and life than on student activities. But perhaps the biggest dilemma facing Soraya when I interviewed her in this final year was about the choice of pharmacy as a career. From an early age she had desired to enter the healthcare profession because of the opportunity to help others and make a difference in their lives.

*I wanted to be there for other people and help them through things like that [health difficulties]. That's basically the bottom line and I'd like to feel I was making a difference. I'd like to see patients coming back to me and [saying] 'Thanks for that advice'.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Her capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* was seen through her concern and recognition of a duty to others. However the values she held as important had been challenged through her recent pharmacy experience, causing her to think that patient care might not be the ultimate priority in many areas of practice, because of financial constraints. Working in a large community pharmacy company over the summer, she had learnt about business and management - and this business drive seemed to pressurise pharmacists to meet targets for patient services which attracted government payments, at the risk of being a detriment to other services and patient care overall.

*I felt there wasn't enough of the patient care – not as much as I'd hoped there would be. I felt there were too many goals and aims and, you know, things that you had to meet. And I went for a few hospital interviews as well and one of the ladies said, 'It's like that in hospital as well' and you have certain targets and you have to meet them. That's when I realised you are kind of limited and shaped by the rules and regulations that are out there and it's really up to you to get out of it what you want within these rules. I've worked with different pharmacists and you see how they operate and what their goals are and you see what they get back from the community. If you feel you want job satisfaction out of the patient care then that is what you will focus on but try to make that your priority and not meeting the rules and regulations.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Soraya had also attended a healthcare conference and seen the potential influence of company representatives on the prescribing of drugs, ultimately aimed at profiting the company. She had realised that her chosen career, though patient care focussed, was also commanded by financial targets, paperwork and rules. She appeared disillusioned.

*At the moment I don't want to be pushed or pressurised into being a pharmacist just because I've done the degree. I want to look outside the box as well and I think that's what I've learnt from university – that you have to look outside the box and really feel 'Are you happy with this?' (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)*

However Soraya was going to take up her pre-registration training place and continue to look at the different opportunities within pharmacy. She had experienced something of the reality of pharmacy and I think, now considered that her view had been idealistic. Yet through *Enquiry and Reflection* she showed independent thinking, as she experienced a challenge to her personal and professional values. She also observed and reflected upon how the values and practices of pharmacists affected others.

#### **6.3.4 Summary of Soraya**

The internationalised university environment had provided a space in which Soraya had developed her intercultural capabilities markedly. The university and School had been sources of friendship, enjoyment and challenge, wherein she had (unexpectedly) experienced something of a cosmopolitan education, and moved to consider her own background, perspectives and identity in relation to those of others. Friendship created through *Social Relations and Participation* had inspired her functioning with *Enquiry and Reflection*. Soraya's interest in exploring her ethnic and religious heritage and cultures provided a stimulus for her to interact and form relationships with a range of students. Commonality of ethnicity and religion had become the foundation upon which differences were realised. She had thoughtfully shown respect and consideration for others (*Respect, Dignity and Recognition*) as she tried not to stereotype (*Mind and Imagination*) and had welcomed opportunities to make friends and explore difference (*Enquiry and Reflection*). Soraya recognised that intercultural relationships and thinking were not always easy but that, through effort, there was value to be gained. Her concern for others was evident in the values she held as important for a pharmacist. Soraya's account illustrates how capability development through effort and mindfulness affected not only her world, but can positively affect those of the people with whom she interacts.

#### **6.4 Wee Ting**

Wee Ting was a Chinese Malaysian student. I interviewed her three times: twice during the pilot study in her third year (in the first as one of a trio and on her own during the second semester) and in the first semester of her fourth year during the main study.

Wee Ting's range on the spectrum of intercultural capability (from Table 5.1) is shown below

Social Relations and Participation	Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Mind and Imagination	Enquiry and Reflection
L	L	L	L

Wee Ting's story is one of a stifling of capabilities. The two capabilities most identifiable in her accounts are *Social Relations and Participation* and *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*. Little data describing *Mind and Imagination* and *Enquiry and Reflection* was evident, suggestive of a paucity of capability in these areas. Wee Ting's experience of study and life in the UK appears to have restricted her agency and functioning and closed down her opportunities to flourish, resulting in an unwelcome change in identity and diminished sense of self.

#### 6.4.1 Friendships in the UK

Wee Ting's restricted experience of wider friendships and intercultural interactions was in stark contrast to those enjoyed by Pei Ann and Soraya. During interviews, social life and friendships was a hard area to probe. It was at times a struggle to elicit information and, at the same time, I was thinking I might cause distress by continuing to question about this area.

Wee Ting's friends were predominantly those she had made at the Malaysia Campus. Since moving away from home to the UK they had become closer as a group. Whereas in Malaysia they tended to go home after laboratory classes, in the UK they stayed afterwards to chat. Yet even within her friendship group she felt somewhat restricted because her house was some distance from most of her Malaysian friends' houses, so it was less easy to socialise outside of class.

Outside the course, Wee Ting had made some friends, although the extent to which she considered them as her own good friends was not clear. She had got to know some students from Thailand and (she thought) Brunei through being invited to social events at the houses of mutual friends. When I asked her whether there was anyone apart from Malaysia Campus students that she would class as a friend, she answered with a somewhat tentative 'I think yes. Not many, but yes'. Throughout our discussions I got the impression that she had not formed many or any meaningful friendships with students outside of her Malaysian group.

Within the course Wee Ting had made some friends. They were all from South East Asia and included a few Malaysian students who had been at the UK campus since their first year. She said that they made friends because 'we tend to have similar backgrounds and we have more topics to talk about'. So again, commonality features in friendship formation. In fact, the notion of friendships

based on similar background recurred throughout Wee Ting's interviews. She stated that international students 'tend to stick with each other', that nationalities gravitate towards each other because it is easier to mix due to having similar backgrounds. When I probed her views about this situation she avoided answering the question. Wee Ting's experience reflects other studies which show that students find it easier to form friendships with culturally or nationally similar students (Chapman and Pyvis 2006; Coles and Swami 2012; Humfrey et al. 2001; Montgomery 2010; Schweisfurth and Gu 2009; Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006; UKCOSA 2004).

Wee Ting offered that international students (with no indication of nationality) tended to be more helpful and friendly to her, especially in group work, than UK students. They tended to chat to each other outside lecture theatres while waiting for classes. In her third year interviews she considered that relatively few UK students were 'nice' and approachable – although some were. She said: 'Quite a few of my mates actually told me about it and when I tried to mix around with my [British] group mates as well they just don't feel like talking to me so that's the difference.' and she thought that the relative lack of engagement by some British students was a general problem encountered by other international students. By the fourth year Wee Ting still seemed to have made relatively few friendships or had few intercultural interactions outside of her Malaysian group, judging by her responses of 'not much' and 'just meet lots of people, not really making friends'. Group work had been the main route for Wee Ting to interact with students at the UK campus. She considered the practice of the School in assigning students to groups was useful, because it had enabled her to get to know other people and stimulated her to think about different ways of working.

Wee Ting had been unable to expand her capability for *Social Relations and Participation* through intercultural interactions at a social level. She appeared to desire more but, because of external circumstances, other people or her lack of confidence, she was unable to fulfil her desire. Unable to summon up the necessary courage, she needed a further stimulus to overcome the barrier to widening her friendships which seemed to exist. In terms of Martha Nussbaum's combined capability (Nussbaum 2000), she might have had some internal capability, but not the external capability because of factors which constrained her functioning.

Wee Ting did not consider herself typical of the Malaysia Campus students in terms of friendships within the UK and was aware that she had not interacted as widely as some of her peers. She talked about others who had mixed well (including one student who had joined the PharmSoc committee), knew a lot of students on the course and participated in social activities with them. I think she wanted to be able to be more like that.

*Some are like me, but not all. X and Y – they are mixing quite well. They tend to know a lot of people in our class. They tend to go out a lot with them. I think*

*some people do really, can speak very well and are very good in making friends, but I don't do very well in that.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Perhaps the most telling comment about Wee Ting's narrow engagement with other students and the culture around her was her view about undertaking an international education. She had told me earlier that she wanted to study in the UK in order to gain some independence and gain an internationally-recognised qualification. However, she now said that she felt it was not of importance for her to be in an international environment. Although conversation became hesitant at this point, it was evident that Wee Ting felt she was not really living within an international population, as she felt so inhibited by her circumstances. She appeared to see being in the UK as being little more than living life with her Malaysian friends, but without some of the benefits and freedom of being in her home country. Some aspects of her capabilities were actually diminished in comparison to her life at Malaysia Campus, which would have had the effect of diminishing her sense of the person she was.

#### **6.4.2 Disappointment and Disempowerment**

My overriding impression of Wee Ting was of a person who was disappointed and felt disempowered. Instead of being an experience which enabled Wee Ting to expand her capabilities, it appeared that the move to the UK had inhibited her in a number of ways, in particular socially, with the effect of restricting her choices and freedoms.

In her interview after 6 months in the UK, Wee Ting spoke quietly, often with resignation in her voice and almost everything she spoke about was negative or disappointing. This sense of disappointment about how things were different than she expected or would have liked, is likely to have affected her psychological well-being and view of her situation. She found it difficult being away from home and she missed her family. She was overwhelmed by a realisation of how much her parents cared about her, which had become apparent only after having moved to the UK. It must have been a difficult discussion to have had with me – to open up such a personal part of her life and feelings:

*I do feel a bit homesick, after long time in UK. Now living in UK, I realise just how much my parents take care of me. Because the Chinese are quite conservative and don't really show their love for you when I was in Malaysia. They don't show it – usually they just keep it in their heart. But only before I come to UK. Now it was like my Dad was so worried. They suddenly show their love to me so much that I didn't see before.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Chinese New Year, an important time of celebration, was also a difficult time. It made her aware of not being with her family and, although she celebrated with her friends in the UK, it was no substitute for home.



*During Chinese New year was very lonely here. At home we have all the relatives come over and visit. It's really nice. And it was very lonely here, although we do have some celebration with friends. But I do miss home. Just the environment is different. Our Chinese New Year lunch - it was not that good as not really good Chinese food.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

At this time Wee Ting wanted to return home sooner than she had originally planned.

*Before I came, I wanted to stay in UK for at least few years. But now I've changed my mind, because I think that after I get pre-reg<sup>34</sup> will go home.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

However by the interview the following year Wee Ting had adjusted better to life away from home and was feeling more comfortable with working abroad for a while. She spoke at a faster pace and more confidently, with some inflection in her voice and occasional humour. Yet she still thought that 'No matter how many places I go I will still go back to Malaysia'.

Wee Ting had experienced some initial difficulties in group work during her first semester in the UK, which had been sufficient to discourage or even suppress further attempts at making contributions. During an early laboratory class she and her friend had felt largely ignored and excluded.

*All three of them [UK students] did the analysis together and the two of us Malaysians were just standing watching them doing. So two of us were outside and looking at them doing the work.* (1<sup>st</sup> interview)

During other group work exercises Wee Ting found it difficult to get her point of view across, so had given up trying.

*Here we do have someone to be group leader immediately, but I don't really like, because over here I'm usually quiet. Because I try to give my thoughts and sometimes they don't really care about me so I tend to be quiet.* (2<sup>nd</sup> interview)

Wee Ting's capabilities for *Social Relations and Participation* and *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* appeared to have been stifled by the actions or lack of capability of others. Willing and desiring though Wee Ting was to participate and work with others, she was largely unable to. She felt a loss of voice and lack of recognition. The effect of this was to further restrict her functioning and so we see the vicious circle of losing her agency and status amongst her peers. Her description 'over here I'm usually quiet' signals how she perceives a change in herself. She is not the 'real me' who in Malaysia was more outgoing, capable and participative. Taking up a mantle of being quiet and

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<sup>34</sup> The period of 52-week pre-registration training in practice following graduation, in order to register as a pharmacist.

unassuming, was how she would have become in the eyes of others and, perhaps also herself.

Socially, Wee Ting was also restricted and disempowered. Outside her academic work, Wee Ting said that she mainly stayed at home, and went out only for grocery shopping or if friends had a party or other social gathering. Constrained by the location of her accommodation, she participated less in the socialising between houses that many of her friends shared. Walking to her friends' houses was made especially difficult in the autumn and winter months because of dark nights – and which was a contrast to the Malaysian climate. Despite this, she and her friends stayed in the same house for their two years of study (because of good quality accommodation and proximity to the supermarket), so this situation persisted.

As a student in Malaysia, Wee Ting had been on the committee of PharmSoc (the student pharmacy society) and felt it had helped her grow in independence and confidence. She was the society's 'official photographer' and had gained much from having been central in organising and participating in events. She also enjoyed a variety of other social activities with her friends. PharmSoc activities in Malaysia were a combination of social and community outreach health events. In contrast, the UK PharmSoc activities centred largely on clubbing and alcohol, in which Wee Ting (and many of her peers) felt unable to participate. This caused disappointment as she felt unable to continue with an active role in the pharmacy society. Wee Ting had attended only the International Evening and Chinese New Year events (the latter organised because of a Malaysia Campus student on the committee). She was definite that, if different events were organised, she would have become involved in the society. Instead she experienced a lack of agency, not only in being unable to join in, but also in being unable to take an active role in social participation and organisation. She spoke with resignation and disappointment about her lack of social life in the UK, saying, 'Before I came I thought I would be more outgoing, but instead I spend more time at home'.

Instead of being an experience that expanded Wee Ting's horizons and helped her to develop a more outward-looking self, that she could be proud of (De Grosbois et al. 2010; Gill 2007; Gu and Schweisfurth 2006; Gu et al. 2010; Ippolito 2007), there appear to be elements that have produced the opposite effect, resulting in a diminished sense of self (Gu and Schweisfurth 2006), which might further inhibit her relationships with culturally different others post-university.

#### ***6.4.3 Summary of Wee Ting***

Wee Ting had been an individual who flourished socially within her peer group at the Malaysia Campus. However she was considerably inhibited following her move to the UK, where she experienced a more restricted self. Socially she was saddened by the relatively restricted situation in which she found herself, whilst in the academic environment she felt inhibited in being

able to express herself and participate. Though having the desire to engage with others, she was unable to find the necessary confidence or courage to overcome some of the barriers to widening her friendships and participating with others. Her inability to function as desired with *Social Relations and Participation* meant that opportunities to develop intercultural were not forthcoming. She felt herself to be constrained by her physical environment and also through the actions of others, to the extent of not even considering herself, an international student, to be living in an international environment. Rather than being an experience to expand her intercultural capabilities, study in the UK did not appear to have allowed, or caused, Wee Ting to benefit from personal development or expansion of her horizons in the way that she had hoped and that many of her peers had; instead she was aware of her diminished sense of self and identity in the eyes of others as well as her.

## 6.5 Samantha

Samantha was a white, British student from a town in the Midlands. I interviewed her once, during the second semester of her fourth year.

Samantha's range on the spectrum of intercultural capability (from Table 5.1) is shown below:

Social Relations and Participation	Respect, Dignity and Recognition	Mind and Imagination	Enquiry and Reflection
L	L	L	L

This account illustrates how the internationalised environment, instead of providing a place for expansion of intercultural capabilities, resulted in some disaffection and antagonism. We see a lack of capability for *Social Relations and Participation* in Samantha's perceptions about and experiences of cultural and friendship groups; her relatively low engagement with others who are culturally dissimilar to herself; and her views about multicultural group working. Her capability for *Mind, Thought and Imagination* likewise appears low as evidenced by little apparent desire to seek to understand others.

### 6.5.1 'Sticking to Your Own Pack'

Samantha appeared strongly conscious of being among a large group of international students and of the feelings which that were aroused. She expressed some open opinions about the international student population and about the interactions that did or didn't occur. Her views seemed coloured by not having expected there to be so many international students and British students from different ethnic backgrounds on the pharmacy course. She perceived herself, as a white British student, to be in a minority<sup>35</sup>, which seemed to provoke some feelings of discomfort.

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<sup>35</sup> Out of a class size of 160 on intake there would have been about 50 white British students, 50 international and 60 British ethnic minority students. By third year, with

*We are the minority. I thought there'd be a lot more of us here. I didn't think there would be nearly as many international students as there is. Like we got these PharmSoc hoodies and I was wearing mine when I went home at Christmas and my dad had a look and there were, like, twenty English names on there<sup>36</sup>. They aren't many.*

*It's not a problem - I don't have a problem with them personally - we're not racist - but it's just getting that we are like a minority, definitely. We do feel like a minority. When you're studying in your own country it's an unusual feeling to be in a minority, basically. It's really bizarre when you go down your local high street and you feel perfectly at home and yet on the course you don't. You could be forgiven for thinking that you are in another country.*

Some other studies have shown that a relatively large number of international students can cause home students to feel swamped, threatened or irritated (Barron 2006; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Peacock and Harrison 2009; Ward et al. 2005).

Samantha's group of friends were predominantly white British, like her. Most of her closer friendships had been made through activities outside the course. She thought the student population was split according to culture and that this was a facet of human nature, saying 'I think you always tend to stick to your own pack'. Samantha thought that friendships were based on similarity – and even upon initial impressions of similarity - meaning that friendships were often formed quickly and soon after arrival at university.

*In halls you just wander around and you see people you might like and think 'She's wearing something I would probably wear; I think I'd like her'.*

The tendency towards staying with the familiar is in evidence here, which acted to reduce the occurrence of meaningful intercultural interactions in the absence of desire or effort.

Samantha did have some friends from different backgrounds, who were mainly pharmacy students. It was apparent that the presence of a large number of international and non-white British students meant that friendships did form as there was little choice. Samantha admitted that she would have been less likely to have made these friends had there been more British students on the course: 'Within pharmacy, because there aren't many of us, we have had to integrate' - indicating her low capability for *Social Relations and Participation* in having little desire to interact out of her comfort zone.

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the Malaysia campus students, the class size was 180 and the proportion of British students therefore less.

<sup>36</sup> Not all students would be members of PharmSoc. The 'English names' would not have included British ethnic minority students.

Accommodation preferences and location were identified as barriers to intercultural mixing. She saw that divisions were created from the outset because of preferences and requirements for accommodation provision.

*They tend to live together because they're all vegetarians or whatever. They have to cook their own. Whereas we were all in halls the first year and we don't have any food requirements, so I think that's a big split because the majority of people in halls don't have any sort of religious background so they can eat anything or whatever. But because they have certain requirements due to their religious beliefs they tend to cook for themselves and they tend to live in [X] or [Y]. They are all coming into campus - this might be why we are so split - because they are all coming into campus from [Y] and we're all coming in from the other side of campus.*

According to Samantha, because many friendships stemmed from the first year in halls or flats, the divisions tended to continue. She also identified that 'white British' students were more likely to continue to live with hall friends than course friends, whereas there were many 'pharmacy-only houses with students of Indian, Malaysian or Asian origin'. She suggested that this geographical separation contributed to the problem, and that if initially they had lived in closer proximity there might have been more mixing.

Samantha observed that students of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are also drawn to be with each other because of their national or religious festivals such as Chinese New Year or Diwali. She saw that these were important times of celebration, but little understood or participated in by the majority of other students. (This reflects Pei Ann and Wee Ting's comments about Chinese New Year and the lack of participation or appreciation of its significance by others in the UK.) These events took place during term time, unlike the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, when students for whom these were important were usually at home with their family and friends. This meant that students were generally obliged to continue working which, as we saw with Pei Ann and Wee Ting, could have a considerable impact upon students' feelings and need to be with culturally similar friends.

However, despite her apparently negative attitude, Samantha said she found the international student environment to be a good thing. She appeared to see the potential, although had not been able to maximise it to a greater extent.

*I think it's good. I value it because I think it's always nice to meet people from other cultures and other countries but I find that the course is so intense and such a lot of work that you don't get the chance to appreciate that and spend time with them.*

Samantha seems to be suggesting (and see also below) that were it not for such a busy course she might have had more time and inclination to appreciate the presence of and engage with students who were culturally different from herself. However the sentiments and lack of cultural sensitivity suggested from

the rest of her interview do not seem to bear this out. She raised a point which has recurred throughout this study, namely, that intercultural communication is not easy or comfortable for either party, so results in superficial conversations and relationships.

*I'd definitely mix more. I've tried it, but because their English isn't so good you can't get as in-depth a conversation or connection as you would with somebody who spoke English properly. You can talk about how they are and stuff but proper interests and stuff like that you just can't get at.*

Samantha's reference to the use of 'proper' English does imply a somewhat dismissive or intolerant attitude. With a lack of the intercultural communication aspects of *Social Relations and Participation* she appeared to be displaying a lack of 'mindfulness' with respect to their conversations, which takes effort (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Volet and Ang 1998). She found the presence of students whose first language was not English frustrating at times because, much as it would be good to spend time overcoming barriers of difference, pressures of academic work took priority. She said that having to correct spelling and grammar, especially when under time pressure, induced feelings verging on resentment.

*It's unfortunate because we get so busy. We have to work with the international students during group work but you are so focused on doing well and passing with flying colours and getting good marks that you end up - it's a bit of a strong word - but you end up kind of resenting them in a way because they do tend to bring you down a bit. With posters and things I've... no fault of their own but, like, their grammar and spelling is not the best so I have to redo it and it just gets a bit frustrating and it's not really their own fault and it's amazing that they can speak English as well as they do with it not being their first language. So it's not them personally it's just the fact that the course is running, I've got x number of weeks to the end of term and....*

Such accounts reinforce the difficulties and effort required for successful intercultural interactions in a busy schedule, especially where students do not perceive any benefit or are concerned about a possible detrimental impact upon performance and marks (Barron 2006; De Vita 2005b; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Leask 2010; Osmond and Roed 2010; UNITE/UKCOSA 2006).

### **6.5.2 Us and Them**

Samantha described the grouped nature of the student population and constantly as 'us' and 'them'. Feelings of isolation and intimidation among groups of students come through strongly. I illustrate below how Samantha saw behaviours as typifying particular groups of students, failed to identify individual differences or recognise or even concede that she might at times act in similar ways to those of whom she was critical.

Group dynamics appeared to have changed when the Malaysia Campus students joined, and Samantha felt outnumbered and inhibited by being in a group of unfamiliar students<sup>37</sup>.

*We've found that the Malaysians have come and all of our groups have altered. They tend to have very similar surnames whereas the home students are scattered completely throughout. So I've found myself isolated in a group and they all live together or they live really close to each other, they're all together, so I've found it really hard to get my input across.*

Samantha's capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* in terms of having voice was diminished when in a group of culturally dissimilar (or perhaps just unfamiliar) students, who were familiar with each other. Although similar experiences and feelings are likely to have been encountered by international students (Baker and Clark 2011; Trahar 2007; Turner 2008; Volet and Ang 1998; Wright and Lander 2003) this was a new and unexpected experience for Samantha, which occurs far less frequently for home students, and appeared to increase Samantha's resentment about the number of international students. Were Samantha able to enact more of a narrative imagination (Nussbaum 1997) using the capability of *Mind and Imagination* she might have realised this insight into the situation of others. Instead she failed to see the difficulties experienced by some international students in participating and having voice when surrounded by unfamiliar others.

*We've got [name X] in our lab, on our project, and she's slowly coming out of her shell, bless her. We'll happily chat away to her and we ask her questions and involve her but she won't ask us anything. Not a word. The poor girl must feel quite [pause]. We're probably a bit of a bad example because we are really good friends. But there are people in the main lab who I've not been best friends with on the course, but [name y] came to work with us the other day and it was really nice. Perhaps someone I wouldn't spend time with. But a Malaysian student or one of the people from the Malaysian Campus wouldn't come over in that situation and it go the same way. It just wouldn't. They just stick together.*

Samantha appeared to feel sorry for the Malaysian student, yet seemed unable to change the situation by enabling her, assuming she wished, to participate more fully with the other students. Her words 'bless her', 'poor girl' also projected her deficit view of this student because of her nationality and apparent shyness or reserve in the laboratory.

Samantha also found groups of 'other' students intimidating at times, for example the large group of British Asian (Indian and Pakistani) students on the course, part of which was a visual effect, but she clearly felt herself to be different from these students as a group.

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<sup>37</sup> The group allocation process has subsequently been changed to ensure a more random distribution of students across the year and from the two campuses.

*I find that they do pack together and they are very opinionated at times. Not as a whole because that's a bit harsh because they are all generally lovely – on their own. But, again, I'm not a racist and I've got nothing against them individually but I think you're right when you say about it being a visual ..... and maybe it's because they just come at you as a clump. If you're on your own you're like, aaagh....*

In this quotation, and in others: 'It's not them personally', 'It's really not their fault' and 'I don't have a problem with them personally', Samantha was keen to emphasise that the problem was not with the individuals, but with the group dynamics. However there was a sense of perhaps trying to over-compensate in order not to be perceived as discriminatory (Harrison and Peacock 2007). Describing members of the group as 'all generally lovely' again suggests trying not to be discriminatory, yet indicating an ethnocentric attitude by such 'complimentary' generalisation (Byram 1997; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Peacock and Harrison 2009). These words again suggest that Samantha had been unable to function with *Social Relations and Participation* in getting to know culturally dissimilar students personally and perhaps discover some common ground.

I turn now to the notion of students sticking together in groups, to the possible exclusion of others. Samantha referred above to a 'clump' of students and said that 'they all stick together' and that 'they do huddle; they don't integrate; it's really difficult'. This would act to stifle Samantha's capability for *Social Relations and Participation* in terms of ease of interacting on an individual level. However on each occasion I challenged Samantha about whether she and other white British students also 'clump', 'stick' or 'huddle' together. She did not think this – or, at least, not to the same extent. Her perception was that specific groups of international or British ethnic minorities students tended to all know each other and be comfortable with each other; she saw them as behaving like a pack. She contrasted white British students as typically being part of smaller, more discrete groups.

*The white students are much more selective. There are white British people on the course who I don't really know very well and some that I know very well, but it just seems that the Asian students all know each other very well. Seems they are..... yeah, they all know everyone.*

Some of the above demonstrates Samantha's lack of capability for *Enquiry and Reflection* – a lack of awareness or ability to consider her own situation in the light of others and also the converse. She failed to recognise that she and her friends also formed groups that, by her own admission, could be considered even more selective and exclusive. She viewed these smaller groups as less intimidating to others. Yet it is these tight groups – perhaps accurately described by Samantha as 'selective' – which some international students find so unwelcoming and difficult to penetrate (Brown 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010) and which some of the Malaysia Campus students in my study have commented upon.



At no point was there any acknowledgement or apparent realisation from Samantha that her experiences of feeling outnumbered, intimidated and inhibited were the experiences of many international, or indeed, culturally or behaviourally different students. Even during her interview, recounting her own experiences juxtaposed against her observations of some of the Malaysian students in particular, she never considered that similar factors might have been at play. Instead, the fault consistently lay with the 'other'.

### **6.5.3 Summary of Samantha**

Samantha's experiences of internationalised higher education served to reinforce (her perceptions of) cultural differences and she retained her apparently ethnocentric attitude throughout. She described her experiences which caused her to lose her agency and ability to function, yet failed to recognise how others might be in similar positions of struggling to exert their own capabilities. Her capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* was at times restricted when she felt marginalised, but she did not appear to equate this with her views or behaviour towards others in affording them respect and recognition. She was unable to function with *Enquiry and Reflection* and to undertake the critical self-reflection required in order to see the relative perspectives of herself and others.

Unexpected feelings of being outnumbered and restricted inhibited her capability for *Social Relations and Participation* and could have negatively coloured her views and ability to recognise the benefit that might be gained from being with students who are culturally dissimilar. Instead her experience has acted to augment an ethnocentric attitude and biased views about some others, which she will carry with her as she graduates from university.

## **6.6 Conclusion: The potential for individual capability development in internationalised higher education**

The accounts above have illustrated the contrasting intercultural experiences of pharmacy students and the way in which they can impact upon students' sense of self and development as an individual. They have also differently identified some of the pedagogical, social and personal circumstances which can impact upon the opening up or closing down of individual capability and agency. I have identified what appeared to be the main factors in Table 6.1. Although some factors were common to the students, the effects and outcomes differed.

Table 6.1 Main Factors Affecting Intercultural Capability Development

<p><b>Pei Ann</b></p> <p>Desire for intercultural interactions Competence in communication Confidence to approach others Group work (friendships)</p>	<p><b>Wee Ting</b></p> <p>Social isolation Feeling unwelcomed Lack of confidence to approach others Group work (exclusion)</p>
<p><b>Soraya</b></p> <p>Large proportion of international and ethnically different students Culture / mixed heritage Group work (friendships and conversation)</p>	<p><b>Samantha</b></p> <p>Large proportion of international and ethnically different students Coming from predominantly white area / background. Feeling intimidated by groups Group work (clashes)</p>

Initial capability had a bearing upon subsequent capability development. Pei Ann, initially eager and confident to make wider friendships, had been able to do this. Functioning with *Social Relations and Participation* enabled her to develop other intercultural capabilities as she came to understand the individuals as distinct from her initial impressions of UK society and student society. Conversely Wee Ting, though wishing to make wider friendships, appeared to lack the confidence, and the opportunity perhaps, to do so. She was unable to step out and actively seek friendships. Soraya, in part perhaps due to her mixed cultural heritage, illustrated her initial capabilities by how she engaged socially with others and reacted to her multicultural surroundings.

Although the internationalised university environment provides the potential for intercultural interactions, the extent to which this happens depends upon students' initial capability and the extent to which they can exercise some agency in seeking interactions within their different situations. Wee Ting's relative lack of intercultural friendships demonstrates how the juxtaposition of culturally different students within the university environment does not necessarily result in intercultural interactions and friendships. A relatively large proportion of culturally different students can provide both opportunity and enrichment, and induce frustration and resentment, in different circumstances and individuals. Both Soraya and Samantha were surprised at the range of nationality and ethnicity of students at the university, yet their reactions and experiences were quite different. Whereas Soraya had capitalised upon the international environment, gaining awareness of others, interest and enjoyment, Samantha had experienced separation, intimidation and frustration. She had been largely unable to discover the individuals within the group. Both Pei Ann and Soraya identified how elements of commonality or common purpose facilitated relationships.

Group work was a factor common to all four students and, because of its evident powerful influence on the development or stifling of intercultural capabilities, is the subject of my next chapter. Both Wee Ting and Samantha experienced alienation. Wee Ting's feelings of exclusion further restricted her capabilities of *Social Relations and Participation* and *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* as she felt unable to participate. These capabilities were also constrained in Samantha, who felt resentment through this. However group work had been a route by which Soraya and Pei Ann had made good friends, including intercultural friendships. Promoting intercultural dialogue and showing respect for each other and their differences laid foundations for the furtherance of their capability and self-development.

The accounts in this chapter support the findings about capability development identified in the previous chapter. Firstly, capabilities are complementary to each other. *Social Relations and Participation* emerged as the foundational capability which enabled opportunity for development of the others. It was evident from Pei Ann and Soraya's accounts that the value of capability development is not only for the individual, but also for others in whom they simultaneously encourage capability. Secondly, achievement of intercultural capability takes personal effort and courage. Both Pei Ann and Soraya made efforts to interact and engage with difference, sometimes despite difficulties and frustrations, enabling them to compare realise their situations with those of others and they overcame some of their initial impressions and assumptions. They saw the value in making the effort, both for the good of themselves and for the well-being of others.

Intercultural capability development can be transformative, as illustrated in the cases of Pei Ann and Soraya. They experienced a change in outlook and themselves, as they adopted a wider world-view and saw the value they had gained through engaging with others, not only for the present but also for their future working lives. Arguably, they had taken the path towards becoming global citizens (Nussbaum 1997). Conversely, Wee Ting and Samantha's experiences served to inhibit capability and their negative experiences had coloured their impressions of and views about the people and cultures with whom they interacted and will encounter in the future.

Understanding some of the factors which impinge upon capability and self-development might enable adjustments to be made within higher education institutions in order to create a learning environment which supports equity, respect and understanding of others, to promote freedom, choice and opportunity. There are inevitably some personal and circumstantial factors over which the university has no control as individuals' actions and behaviours can act to stifle or to open up agency and capability. However, seeking to expand capabilities might not only enhance the environment in which students they study and live, but also promote values which will accompany them, as graduates, into society. For students of pharmacy, their values and actions will ultimately influence the health and well-being of others with whom they interact.

My final chapter, which follows, explores the role of pedagogy and, in particular group work, given its potentially powerful influence on capability development within higher education.

## **Chapter 7**

### **The Role of Pedagogy in Intercultural Capability Development: Group Work**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The two previous chapters focussed on students' intercultural capabilities in the context of their overall experiences of internationalised higher education. Findings from the data pointed to the beneficial effects of becoming more interculturally capable, both for one self and for the enhanced well-being of others, yet they revealed a somewhat serendipitous nature to the extent of development of intercultural capabilities according to individual students' circumstances, outlook and opportunity. However there were strong indications that pedagogy can have a powerful influence over capability development, and the promotion of a more cosmopolitan, interculturally capable self is something to be explored within the context of developing values and behaviours as future pharmacy professionals.

The previous chapters have demonstrated that there is potential to be gained from pedagogies which focus on engaging students to interact and work together. Group work was a recurring strong theme which arose spontaneously in the interviews, emerging as a notable aspect of students' educational and intercultural experiences. Some illustrations from group work were necessary in the previous two chapters, but its discussion has been relatively brief, in order to explore some aspects more fully here. This chapter will therefore focus on the effects of the pedagogical environment, exploring an aspect of course pedagogy which appears to have had a significant bearing upon students' experiences and extent of capability and self-development.

Multicultural group work emerged as an element of the course pedagogy which presented rich opportunities for intercultural interactions and development of intercultural capabilities. It was a medium through which students could interact with each other as individuals, providing opportunities for conversation, so enabling development of their intercultural communicative ability. When students were fortunate, and perceived that they had a friendly, conscientious group in which to work, there were benefits to be gained, in learning not only with, but also about others and their lives, helping to prepare them for their future lives and careers in multicultural environments. However, group work was also a forum which presented challenges for students in working together and which served to highlight some conflicting individual and cultural differences and reinforce divisions. When students had the misfortune to be in a group whose individuals did not work well together, communication was poor, that is, interactions were perfunctory and short-term and there were clashes of expectations and behaviours leading to frustration and the reinforcing of cultural assumptions and stereotypes. Such situations not only failed to provide opportunity and benefit in terms of capability, but also acted to stifle and constrain functioning.

Group work is a medium in which the social context of learning comes to the fore and, as such, we see its influence in building or diminishing students' social capital and agency. It was evident that there was a balance to be struck between short-term ease and efficiency in academic work versus effort and long-term gain through opportunities for intercultural learning.

## **7.2 The Pedagogy of Group Work**

The use of group work within higher education is seen as a means of fostering teamwork, student engagement and cooperative learning. Learning with others, drawing on the range of skills present within a group, is thought by educationalists to enhance students' intellectual, personal and professional development and encourage deeper learning (Nicholls 2002; Prosser and Trigwell 1999; Ramsden 1992). Collaborative working achieves these aims through cognitive skills of knowledge and understanding; improved skills of, for example, communication and organisation and affective benefits such as participation, belonging and involvement. Group work has also been a source of conflict, tension and frustration due to differing expectations and ways of learning and clashes of personality resulting in disengagement and surface learning (Fry et al. 2009; Jacques and Salmon 2007; Thorley and Gregory 1994).

Socially and educationally, group work might help prepare students for the arena of work, for example by developing skills in collaborative group working, interacting with others and managing teams (Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Robinson 2006; Summers and Volet 2008; Sweeney et al. 2008); interacting with others. It might help students to function more effectively within the intercultural contexts of their worlds through enhancing their intercultural communication skills, intercultural appreciation and understanding and helping them to view issues from broader, more holistic, global perspectives (De Vita 2002; Ippolito 2007; Kelly 2008; Knight and De Wit 1995; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Montgomery 2009; Sweeney et al. 2008; Volet and Ang 1998).

## **7.3 Group Work in the MPharm**

The MPharm course comprises a significant amount of group work, including one or two assessed group work activities per semester. Group sizes and tasks are varied, consisting of laboratory classes and group production of laboratory findings in the first three years; group posters and presentations in all years and a semester-long research project in the final year. In the main, group membership is dictated by the School, with selection of members from across the alphabetical list in order to avoid groupings of similar names, hence likely backgrounds, and changed for different modules. Given the significant amount of summative work, in addition to workshop activities, the subject of group work provoked a substantial amount of discussion within interviews.

In the chapter I will discuss the role and effects of group work within the MPharm course on capability and self-development, as evidenced through student interview data. Group work was often talked about at length and was discussed with regard to the course and student cohort in general, but it is the findings which pertain specifically to intercultural issues that I shall discuss here.

In the first part of the chapter I discuss the positive aspects of group work identified by students, which showed its potential to favourably affect the development of intercultural capability. The main themes within this part are: intercultural relationships; learning with, from and about others; and training for career and life. The second part of the chapter discusses the negative aspects, which act as a barrier to intercultural capability development. Although students identified problems with group working across the board, there was often a tendency to attribute individual conflicts to cultural group differences. The themes in this section are: superficial friendships; exclusion; difficulties in intercultural communication; and clashes through different approaches and attitudes to work.

#### **7.4 Group Work as a Vehicle for Enhancing the Development of Intercultural Capability**

In this section I discuss the beneficial aspects of group work identified through the interviews. Firstly, working in School-selected groups provided the opportunities for students to become acquainted and form friendships with a variety of others, whereby they could share something of each other's lives and backgrounds. Secondly, it enabled students to experience differing ideas and approaches and to talk about issues of culture and difference. Thirdly, students recognised the benefits they gained for their future careers and lives, through the development of team-working skills and intercultural communicative capability, and working with diverse individuals. Overall it provided a common purpose for students to come together.

##### ***7.4.1. A Route to Intercultural Relationships***

The forming of (intercultural) relationships through group work tended to be described on two levels: becoming acquainted with others on the course and friendship formation. Having a large number of students on the MPharm meant that it was otherwise difficult to become acquainted with others in a meaningful way, hence one of the most commonly reported benefits of group work was that it was a good way of getting to know and learn about others on the course.

*Because the university assigns us it's a good way for us to get to know everyone.*  
(Wee Ting, MC, IV, 01.12.08)

*I think poster and seminar workshop is a very good way to learn about different people.*  
(Julia, Int (UK), IV, 27.01.10)

*You get closer to some people and you tend to make conversation with them.*  
(Tien Tien, MC, III, 10.03.09)

*You get thrown into the same groups just to do a poster or something and so you have to interact with each other whether you like it or not and - you just get to know each other.*  
(Ghee Vui, MC, III, 10.03.09)

That groups were assigned by the School was generally seen by students as beneficial because it forced them out of their usual friendship groups and comfort zones, enabling them to become acquainted with others which they would not otherwise have done. It provided opportunities for *Social Relations and Participation*.

*It's a very easy way to make friends; very convenient I might say. Because they [UK students] all have their own cliques so they stick with them and they don't actively come out of their cliques and mix around a lot. When you are doing group work, say lab work, they are split from their group and they have to face you and they have to talk to you. But if they were not given that opportunity I don't think they would have that initiative to come out. When you are forced to do work with them they are nice and everything; they get to know you and stuff.*  
(Wen Peng, MC, III, 17.03.09)

Four students from different countries specifically commented that working with students of different nationalities was a necessary element of studying abroad.

*That's a chance for us to mix around. You should do it [allocate groups] rather than us choosing our own groups - or [it] defeats the purpose of coming here to study because we can do that [mix with students of the same nationality] back home.*  
(Siew Lan, MC, III, 10.02.09)

*You can pair up on your own. But I prefer if you can assign a group of them, like two person, two person - one UK student, one Malaysian student, one - other. That would give you more chance to mingle with them.*  
(Kimi, Int (MC), III, 02.12.08)

Some other studies report that students, both UK and international, expressed a preference for group mixing to be contrived, as it enabled them to break out of their 'comfort zone', get to know others, be part of a greater cultural mix and to be exposed to different views and approaches - although in some cases only once they have experienced it, recognising that it is initially not always easy and can take time to get to know others (Henderson 2009; Ippolito 2007; Osmond and Roed 2010; Robinson 2006; Sweeney et al. 2008). Interacting with students of different cultures was also seen by some as an essential element of study abroad (Smart et al. 2000; Volet and Ang 1998). This preference for deliberate mixing is important, given the widespread consensus that without some contrivance of multicultural study groups, students would



otherwise show little tendency to mix outside their own cultural or ethnic groups (De Vita 2002; Hills and Thom 2005; Volet and Ang 1998) – not just during group work, but within class in general (Dunne 2009; Harrison and Peacock 2010a).

Many students thought that, although, of course, many of the friendships made through group work were not deep relationships, they nevertheless added to the general ‘friendly’ feel of the course.

*Not very good friends but definitely friendly, like when you come to class – ‘Hey, how’re you doing’ and stuff. (Kah Yeang, MC, III, 17.03.09)*

Forming the initial relationship provided the basis for future *ad hoc* interactions, allowing students of different cultural backgrounds to be more friendly and, particularly, more relaxed in each other’s company.

*[A]nd then if you pass them in the corridor or whatever you’ll have a bit of banter with them but you can’t do that unless you’ve got to speaking to them before. Just little conversations here and there, you wouldn’t feel comfortable messing around with them. But when you’ve been through a lab... (Simon, UK, III, 03.12.08)*

In this way, group work provided a relatively easy way of students getting alongside each other; it reduced the hurdles they had to overcome in order to function with *Social Relations and Participation*; to interact and become more comfortable in each other’s company. As shown in other research, home students felt that group work provided the starting point for conversations, hence getting to know international students better (Harrison and Peacock 2010a). Such interactions might not otherwise have taken place.

Group work similarly provided a means by which students from the different campuses could become acquainted with each other when the students from Malaysia arrived – thereby facilitating the capability of *Social Relations and Participation* from the cross-campus perspective. It offered a space in which students could talk to each other on a personal level, which was seen as beneficial by students from Malaysia and the UK.

*The class is big. So when it comes to group work there is a chance for them to sit down and get to know you and that’s how we become friends. They do give a lot of advice to us as well, especially in the beginning. (Wen Peng, MC, III, 17.03.09)*

*If you went into a lecture in the last semester, you would still see all the Malaysians in the middle so they still did stick together, but I think we have integrated a lot more than we did last year. Maybe it was harder because everybody was new, but group work helped. (Soraya, UK, IV, 04.02.10)*

*[Malaysia Campus students] also asked – I've really enjoyed it – like in our lab the other week they asked a lot of questions about: 'It's cold; is it going to get colder? Is there somewhere I can get a hot drink?' What they can do? Where they can go? But I don't think they would have done that unless they'd been with us in group work.* (Sadie, UK, III, 03.12.08)

Sadie's words above reflect the pleasure she derived from these interactions. This indicates her capability for *Enquiry and Reflection* and also shows her functioning with the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* as she connected with the well-being of the Malaysia Campus students. Through her actions and genuine willingness to engage with these students she was also helping to expand their capability.

Group work provided a forum for forming friendships and it was through this, particularly in the earlier years of the course, that many students formed their close course friendships. For most students this included both similar cultural background and intercultural friendship formation.

*I have Indian friend, Korean and then some from the Caribbean and some, like, British friends and yeah, some of them are Asian as well. I make those friendships mainly through, I think, lab classes because we used to work in a group especially in our first year.* (Jane, Int (UK), III, 03.02.09)

*I've actually really enjoyed it [mixing with students of different cultural backgrounds]. Especially in my lab at the moment; there is myself, one other English girl and then I've got my PhD student who is looking after me and he is Spanish. The other guy, who sort of looks after another girl but who is linked to my guy, is Icelandic and then we've got four Italians as well so it's been really good chatting with them and finding out about culture and stuff. Even weird stuff like, actually the Italians don't have such a thing as 'bolognese' – it's 'ragu'!* (Shaun, UK, IV, 23.02.10)

*Some of the UK students, because we work in the lab every day and it's nicer if I want to talk to them because we can just stop and it's nice to really discuss amongst ourselves, because what some of the supervisors are telling us doesn't really make sense sometimes, so we discuss it amongst ourselves and maybe we can help each other out. And maybe we will do that over a meal – either at lunchtime or sometimes we go out in the evening.* (Kah Yeang, MC, IV, 17.05.10)

More sustained contact, for example through series of laboratory classes or final year projects, tended to lead to closer friendships. The time allowed students, through talking with each other and becoming friends, to learn something about each other and their cultures. Again we see the pleasure – for example in Shaun's quotation above – that some students took from this. When working together in laboratory classes extended over a period of time, students tended to take breaks together or walk home together at the end of work, providing further opportunities to continue conversation and friendships.

Shorter group assignments meant that students became acquainted with each other, enhancing the general ‘friendliness’ within the course.

So, many course friendships had been forged through group work, ranging from deep friendships to friendly acquaintances, reflecting positive findings from other studies about friendships through group work (Campbell and Li 2008; Ippolito 2007; Kelly 2008; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Montgomery 2009; Osmond and Roed 2010; Sweeney et al. 2008) . Although many interactions remained at a temporary level, group work provided the means by which more lasting friendships were formed. Importantly it allowed students, particularly over a sustained period, to get to know other students as individuals. They ceased to view each other predominantly as one of a group, but as persons in their own right, irrespective of their country, culture or background (Montgomery and McDowell 2009; Volet and Ang 1998). Students found that the relationship provided the foundation for being able to chat informally, illustrating again how the foundational capability of *Social Relations and Participation* provided the stepping-stone to the others. One student observed that when they become more familiar through laboratory work with students of different cultures and nationalities, they did not self-select into close cultural groups as they had done initially.

The intercultural capability development offered by collaborative working might be considered an unintended, though beneficial, consequence of the course pedagogy. The primary pedagogical role of group work is to learn with and from others and it is to that which I now turn.

#### ***7.4.2 Learning With, From and About Others***

In this section I show how, through the experience of working in groups, students were able to use and develop their capabilities, particularly of *Mind and Imagination*, as they learned to compromise and to adapt their ways of working and thinking. This area was discussed by students from all groups in relation to the pharmacy student group as a whole, and experiences of group work highlight how being interculturally capable can be applied to interactions with other people generally. Students had to interact and work with students who were not like them, for whatever reason. International students in particular tended to raise group work with regard to working with students of different nationality and culture.

Many described the positive aspects of experiencing others’ ways of working and thinking; how it helped them to experience different approaches and see how things could be done differently.

*I really enjoy working with different people, because we will see how they think and it will kind of give me some motivation or it will give me some insight on how should I tackle or examine in a different way to solve the problem.*  
(Jane, Int (UK), IV, 23.02.10)

*A good experience because I get to work with different people and different ways of working. I found myself adjusting. (Jeannette, Int (UK), III, 27.01.08)*

*They [Malaysia Campus students] are very hard working and they have a team spirit and they stick together as a group and they don't mind sharing the work and their opinions and we can learn from that.*

*(Julia, Int (UK), IV, 27.01.10)*

The course curriculum and pedagogy contributed to development of students' capability for *Mind and Imagination* by provoking them to reflect upon or question their own stance.

*There were a few of the Malaysian students in our poster group and you could tell that they were very hard working and they are very organised as well. They've got the group together and they've said we should do this, this and this and they get loads of information. It's fine, it works well, but then you kind of think whether they are doing too much or am I not doing enough or maybe they are just naturally quite studious.*

*(Sahen, UK, III, 06.02.09)*

*Quite a lot of the [law and ethics workshop] groups were with people we did know, but also some people we hadn't encountered at all before so that was interesting. It made me take a step back because I hadn't thought about it in that way. So I did see some very different views and in some of those scenarios me and [name] were going through, she was totally against something where I was totally for it. So, yes, there is no right or wrong answer but it was very interesting from that point of view. But the thing is, I think that is actually very good because some people may have never seen that, or actually thought that their views must be right, but actually everyone else has their own beliefs and it's most probably not right or wrong but just different.*

*(Sarah, UK, IV, 21.01.10)*

It became clear that, beneficial though capability development through intercultural interactions might be, some students perceived it might only be gained through sacrificing some ease and efficiency in group working. It increased the effort needed to work well together as a group.

*Yes, there are things to be gained but the problem is you need time. Do you want to spend the time to understand the different cultures or do you want to work in a perfect system. What's the point of mixing with someone you are not familiar with, and you might need time to compromise and understand each other? So the only [way] is that we are forced to do it by presentation and labs and group work – that is how we are forced to work with the Malaysians and other cultures because we have no choice. But I do really think that is a good thing to do.*

*(James, Int (UK), III, 01.12.08)*

*If we get to choose our own group we do our work very fast, because we know each other very good, but we will not know so many people. And because we*

*are seeing a lot of people we are doing a lot of thinking and the way we work will change every time.* (Wee Ting, MC, IV, 01.12.08)

*There is frustration a lot of the time in having to organise each other and come to terms with different people's methods of working. You have to do a lot to get not much out. But I think I enjoy it because we do get to talk to each other a lot more and you get to know other people and how they work. I like the idea of being thrown in with different people I don't know and it changing every time, because you get to talk to a lot more people. But there have been times when you think that if you were in a group of friends you could arrange to meet up very easily and we could just get on with it and we'd know exactly where we stood as people and it would take half the time.* (Serena, UK, IV, 28.04.09)

The students above highlighted the potential trade-off that might have to be made between efficiency of working in groups with others who are more familiar versus development of intercultural capabilities, although they concluded that there was benefit to be gained in working with others. This perceived conflict between short-term efficiency in working versus potential longer-term gain in intercultural capability has been highlighted in other studies (De Vita 2001; Ippolito 2007; Osmond and Roed 2010), and they also show that, over a longer time, these factors might even out, with the benefits of cultural diversity and variety of ideas outweighing the initial practical difficulties.

In terms of recognising the potential longer term gain, three students (two UK; one international) described, as in other studies (Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Osmond and Roed 2010), how they had learnt to play to each other's strengths, despite initial disappointment or frustration at others' lack of skills in some areas. Sadie from the UK, for example, initially concerned about working in groups with international students whose English might not be as good as she would have liked, came to realise the benefits of having people with different but complementary skills within a group. She was functioning with *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*.

*Some things they have written, you think 'That's just awful', but then the other thing as well is you get given some things to do and some of them you are good at but others – like some awful chemistry or maths – you just think that you can't deal with this, but then somebody will step in and it seems quite natural for them and they do it straight away. So basically you all have your strengths and you have to work to them and once you realise that they are good at something then you say, 'Oh I don't mind doing the grammar checks' because they have contributed – but you just didn't realise that's what they were going to contribute.* (Sadie, UK, IV, 01.02.10)

Students were challenged, not only by having to adapt and work in different ways with different people, but also through encountering different opinions or views (Campbell and Li 2008; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Ippolito 2007; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012). This was seen as a positive step in self-development

because it was a means of becoming more open-minded to others' opinions and ways of thinking. The development of the self came through learning to accommodate different views and perhaps (re)consider, in the light of this, one's own views.

*Throughout my three years I feel more comfortable and convenient with working with someone that I don't really know. How to let go of your own mind and accept others - it's hard. Before you accept other people's mindset you have to open your [mind] otherwise you don't give them a chance. You dictate and say no, no, no. So you have to just open your [mind] and get people's minds in there. And then you think about it and then you say 'yes' or 'no' or discuss it the way it is.* (James, Int (UK), IV, 27.01.10)

*When you know someone on a friendship basis you will often know what they mean but when it's someone different, ooh, it makes you think about it. I would have said [the different points of view] were generally for many different reasons: from their upbringing but probably more from their ethnicity - just because people weren't used to certain things.* (Sarah, UK, IV, 21.01.10)

This opening of the mind, functioning with *Mind and Imagination*, did not apply exclusively to academic matters; interactions through group work also provided an opportunity for introducing issues of difference and for reducing cultural stereotypes and assumptions, as students interacted on an individual level.

*Initially some of the [nationality] are very – how should I describe them? They are a bit ....but if you get to know some of them by doing projects - because you can talk to them in the labs they are quite OK.* (Kah Yeang, MC, IV, 17.05.10)

*And that's where group work comes in because that's more getting to know people as people and not just seeing them in their cultural box.* (Jacqui, Int (UK), IV, 28.04.09)

It was apparent that making intercultural friendships allowed students to feel comfortable discussing issues that they would otherwise have found awkward. Group work thus provided a space for further intercultural capability development as students compared and contrasted their own lives and upbringing. Students' recognition of common humanity with the realisation that 'you're not actually that different' might sow the seeds for future intercultural relationships and understanding.

*Once you get thrown together in labs and you start speaking to each other and asking what you're doing and stuff you realise that you're not actually that different. So once you realise that and you get past the hurdle it's a lot easier to talk to each other without thinking you are going to offend them in some way. Because to me, if I don't really know a lot about their religion, am I going to say something that might offend them? But once you get talking to*

*each other it's not that bad – they are not that easily offended – as they think I might be. I went to a Christian school and I never learnt about other religions and sometimes I feel a bit rude really that I don't know about other people's religions, and I don't think you can fully understand someone unless you do know about their religion. And they don't seem to mind really and they'll say that they don't celebrate Christmas and it's nice that I can ask them questions and I don't mind if people ask me questions about Christianity either. So once you're thrown together you realise that you're not that different and you could probably have started speaking straight away, as soon as you started.*

*(Sadie, UK, III, 03.12.08)*

*I think you can lose your inhibitions because if you don't know much about people you feel as if you're walking on egg shells, but the more you learn the less you are worried and the more comfortable you'll feel about what you can say and what you can do and what you can get away with, as it were. But in the labs is the best time to socialise because we don't socialise really or integrate outside of lectures or anything like that.* (Simon, UK, III, 03.12.08)

So, by having to learn with and alongside others, being challenged by difference, students recognised the positive aspects of experiencing other's ways of working and thinking, reflecting other research findings (De Vita 2000; De Vita 2005a; Ippolito 2007; Osmond and Roed 2010; Sweeney et al. 2008; Volet and Ang 1998). Though not always easy, they adapted to difference and came to appreciate the varied and complementary skills held by others. They could share and develop their views, opinions and experiences, either through formal assignments in which they were challenged to share ideas or viewpoints, or through the conversations which arose through working alongside others. Their capabilities for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* and *Mind and Imagination* were being expanded through opportunities to function.

In the next section I show how these experiences gained through working with others in the university environment were considered by students to be helpful for developing skills and attitudes which are valuable for their future careers and lives.

#### ***7.4.3 Working with Others: Training for Career and Life***

Students saw that the experiences of working in multicultural groups, whether positive or negative, were useful and important on the journey to becoming a pharmacist - and for life in general. The experience of training to work in a team was commonly mentioned, as was the imperative of getting to know others in your team and together produce the work. The sphere of professional pharmacy was understood by the students as a team environment and, although students encountered some problems in team dynamics, they were rationalised as preparation for the future when working in teams.

*When I've been in industry you work as a group and it's good to delegate and it's good to share your ideas which I think is great. And I like the idea of*

*group work because eventually we will be working in groups and you never work in isolation.*  
(Sarah, UK, III, 03.02.09)

*Group work can be annoying but I think that if we didn't do it - and especially because we are going into a profession where we will have to work with other people - then we wouldn't really be equipped for work. It surprises me that some other courses never do group work at all and never actually have to work with any other people.*  
(Serena, UK, IV, 28.04.09)

Discussions about the potential benefit gained through group work in preparation for one's career fell into two main areas, namely: learning to compromise and adapt; and intercultural communication.

#### **7.4.3.1 Learning to Compromise and Adapt**

Through being exposed to others' approaches to learning and working, students had to learn to compromise or adapt. The 'problems' were often due to individuals, rather than to intercultural issues. Having to learn to work with different people was not always welcomed or easy, but was recognised as something which helped their development and ultimately their ability to work with others. Students developed their capabilities for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* and *Enquiry and Reflection* as they became more able to do this.

*I guess in group work you do get to know people and their learning style because you have to work together and you have to adapt to each other. So you do kind of learn from each other because you have to work as a team and you have to get along with each other. So you probably won't do it the way you would have done it by yourself; you've got to learn how somebody else would have done it and so you kind of learn that way because you have to adapt to make it work. When you've got a mixed group you've got to adapt to the 'let's get it done' attitudes and those with the 'not so bothered' attitudes. I've never done that badly in group work - probably not as well as I would have by myself - but then that's the whole point about group work and you've got to deal with it. Sometimes I'm probably helping the person who is not as academically bright as me. I'd probably rather do things on my own but you've got to work with other people and that's just part of life really.*  
(Sandra, UK, IV, 09.02.10)

*At first I don't really like group work because I don't like other people slowing me down and I just find that I tend to slow down when I'm working with other people. But it's been good in that I've learnt a lot from it. Like I said, working with people made me realise where I stand, how I am and just how to react back.*  
(Kayla, Int (MC), IV, 01.12.08)

Chung Jin, likening this aspect of learning to the multi-professional healthcare environment, expressed his capability not only for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, which allowed him to appreciate the value in others'



contributions, but also for *Mind and Imagination*, as he expanded his mind by learning from them.

*Because we have our own professional knowledge and other people will have their experience and knowledge, and by getting it all will give you a much better plan and a much better judgement. So it's practical experience and knowledge which comes from all of us. When I get registered I'll be a junior pharmacist and all the GPs and surgeons maybe they are much more experienced than I am and I can learn from their experience and their knowledge and that's the way that the project work is going to help in opening my mind to other people's knowledge.* (Chung Jin, MC, III, 17.02.09)

#### **7.4.3.2 Intercultural Communication**

Working in groups was seen by students as a way by which they could enhance their intercultural communication ability. It provided the opportunity for students to interact and converse with others with different languages, accents and cultures. Through these experiences students developed their capability for *Social Relations and Participation* as they became more familiar with communicating across cultural and language differences. They recognised the importance of being understood and of enabling the two way interaction that facilitated understanding.

*It's just understanding and getting the points across, which is the hard bit. I wouldn't have been able to do it before uni but I find it a lot easier to deal with now.* (Simon, UK, III, 03.12.08)

*When you're in a group I find that they interact really well though because although they sometimes want you to speak a bit slower or if you've got a bit of an accent but once you've got over that then it's a lot easier. You can understand that though. They may need a word explaining sometimes, but they're not afraid to ask what a word means or whatever.* (Sadie, UK, III, 03.12.08)

A few British students appeared to empathise and tried to accommodate each other's needs, realising that for some international students it might be an issue of confidence, unfamiliarity or uncertainty which hindered their contributions, rather than personality or a deficiency in language. Suraj had come to recognise the role of good intercultural communication with respect to others' well-being, which came through working together:

*I've learnt how important communication is and treating people in the right way because you will need them to help you as much as you can help them and you need to look after each other. So good communication is one of the real important things, whether it's as a pharmacist or in the degree or whether it's outside of that. Communication is one of the biggest factors - but just working with people - so group working has made a difference.* (Suraj, UK, IV, 08.12.08)

Group work, therefore, helped students become more used to communicating interculturally, thereby becoming less inhibited in conversations and likely to be more inclusive in future, and they could see the value of that.

In summary, despite a range of experiences of group work being reported, students tended to acknowledge its value as preparation for some aspects of their future career and life. It provided a forum for fostering skills in teamwork and organisation and an opportunity for students to share and develop their ways of learning, thinking and communicating in a multicultural environment.

My research has illustrated the power of collaborative working to foster capability development through promoting intercultural conversation and friendships; learning to work, from and about others; fostering skills in intercultural communication; changing attitudes to culturally different others and, in so doing, helping to prepare students for their futures with a more cosmopolitan, inclusive attitude. Examination of student experiences of group work through the lens of capabilities has shown how it provides opportunities for functioning – importantly with *Social Relations and Participation* – so valuable in paving the way to further functioning and development of capabilities, and an understanding and opening of the mind to others who are culturally different. I turn now to what is a very different picture as I explore the negative findings about working in diverse groups, which act to inhibit capability and inclusivity.

## **7.5 Group Work as a Barrier to the Development of Intercultural Capability**

Many students had mixed experiences of group work, having worked in both ‘good’ and ‘bad’ groups. The biggest contrast was identified by Malaysia Campus students, who often found their early experiences in the UK in particular to be negative in comparison to those at the Malaysia Campus. In this section I describe how working in multicultural groups led to highlighting difference and division and proved to be a barrier to intercultural understanding and relationships. Interactions, when they happened, remained at a functional level, in part due to difficulties in communication; students felt excluded; and there was disagreement and conflict about methods of working. Group work highlighted the effects of a lack of intercultural capability.

### ***7.5.1. Superficial Friendships***

Despite the generally friendly tone that group work engenders, disappointment was expressed, particularly by Malaysia Campus students, because relationships formed within group work did not continue outside and subsequent to the group project. In contrast to students’ expectations, relationships seemed to be purely functional, for the time of the work only, and UK students were viewed as being rather distant and unfriendly in this respect.

In this context interactions outside groups were described at best as 'hi-bye' friends to, at worst, ignoring each other.

*After the work had finished, when we see next time, some people will kind of forgot you.*  
(Julia, Int (UK), III, 03.03.09)

*We will talk to each other during the tutorial or stuff like that. If they don't understand then we discuss a bit if they sit next to me - they ask me a question or things like that, or I ask them a question. But out of the lecture theatre, out of the room it seems like they don't know me and it seems like I don't know her. It's a type of friendship but not pure friendship.*

(Kimi, Int (MC), III, 02.12.08)

Sue Wen from Malaysia offered an example of a reason why she had fewer friendships with white UK students than British ethnic minority students, whom she saw as more willing to be friendly. In her view, British students had little inclination to continue conversation outside of the functional group work task.

*I do have local students in my group work but somehow we just - after we finish off the assignment they just don't bother talking more to you. 'OK, that's it! Dismiss!' So I'm always like, 'Oh, OK. I was going to ask some more questions but ...' They just don't bother to do that.*

(Sue Wen, MC, IV, 17.03.10)

The ultimate goal of group work is to fulfil an academic outcome, but it is facilitated by rapport between group members, which comes through being socially comfortable with one another. This sense of social comfort was seen to be hindered or, at least, not helped, by students having few common interests, topics of conversation or social activities in which they could easily share. So friendships did not easily flow from group work. UK students were seen by some international students as rather distant and difficult to approach and, though they might interact during group work, once it was over, then so was the relationship, as illustrated by the quotation from Sue Wen above and in other studies (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Koehne 2005; Osmond and Roed 2010; Summers and Volet 2008; Volet and Ang 1998). This distance on the part of UK students, again noted in the literature (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Trahar 2007; Turner 2008), was a source of disappointment to some of the Malaysia Campus students, who longed to make closer friendships with students from the UK campus. These findings suggest that the students were unable to function with *Social Relation and Participation*, either through choice, lack of capability or through lack of other's functioning.

However, of greater concern perhaps, was the exclusion from participation in groups felt by some students in my study, as illustrated below.

### 7.5.2. Exclusion

The literature points to how experiences of exclusion and frustration in multicultural group work are not uncommon (Harrison and Peacock 2007; Mullins et al. 1995; Summers and Volet 2008; Trahar 2007; Turner 2008; Ward et al. 2005; Wright and Lander 2003). In my study, exclusion was described solely in relation to intercultural dynamics. Most of the accounts of exclusion within groups came from Malaysia Campus students, particularly in the third year of the course when they joined the UK cohort. The students I spoke with suggested that this was a widespread problem amongst this group of students, supported by the examples below, which come from students with a range of intercultural capability.

*I think they tend to exclude us a bit. You've got to take the initiative to go in and say that you want to help and stuff like that.*

*(Myung Eun, MC, III, 03.02.09)*

*When I first came doing my third year it was new and because they put us into groups straight away in labs it was very hard to get the local students to hear our point of view and I thought it was just me so I shared my experiences with my Malaysian classmates and they all say the same thing.*

*(Kayla, Int (MC), IV, 01.12.08)*

*First of all we don't know them so it's quite difficult to mix with them. The first group I was with was the chemistry poster and there were only two other students in the group and they actually neglect us for - they didn't tell us about the meeting in the afternoon. Actually we were supposed to have a meeting sometime after class, but they had it in between the class where we had one hour spare, but they didn't inform us. They just end up giving us, 'OK, you have to do this part' and so we don't get to choose what we want to do. I was quite upset about that because we were not working as a team and we were supposed to work as a team. That's the problem in UK.*

*(Sue Wen, MC, III, 03.02.09)*

*Last semester we had this group thing we had to do – molecular pharmacology - and I didn't like it that much because I felt kind of useless. Everybody was doing something and I just stood there and... I felt weird. I felt a bit useless and they were all guys and I was the only girl. So when the experiment was done we came to the calculation. Everybody had something to do and I was just sitting there. But in Malaysia you expect everybody gets something to do; it's equally divided. Sometimes if there's an extra choice some people would volunteer to do it, pick it up. Get it done with. Until we had to do the conclusion and I did write something and I think that was the most I contributed.*

*(Tien Tien, MC, III, 10.03.09)*

This sense of exclusion or being outnumbered, as we saw in Samantha, was identified by Sandra, an English student who had spent her second year in study abroad at the Malaysia Campus.

*But I've been in groups where I've been outnumbered and they've all taken charge and I've been on the outside.* (Sandra, UK, IV, 09.02.10)

Despite this initial feeling, Sandra went on to describe how well she had subsequently been accommodated and welcomed into study groups by the students in Malaysia.

Being new to the UK environment and practices inevitably plays a part in this process, as does the regrouping of students throughout the course at the UK campus, with different, often relatively unfamiliar members. However some students demonstrated a lack of capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* in recognising others and a responsibility to them and, by inducing feelings of failure or inferiority in others, inhibited *their* capability, which we saw in the case of Wee Ting in the previous chapter. Their lack of awareness of others and their well-being created a situation of inequity, which is particularly pertinent in the light of Julia's comment below in which she expressed a view that many Asian students have a feeling of inferiority *per se* when not on home ground.

*Asian people are more reserved. And they will feel like they are in other peoples' countries and they will feel they have a low position and, especially if they don't have good English, people will try to ignore them and they will be afraid of them.* (Julia, Int (UK), III, 03.03.09)

It is not necessarily the behaviour and attitudes of the local students alone that create the problem. Julia's view helps to reveal how a vicious circle might be set up, which serves to further reinforce these respective dominant and subservient behaviours, so widening the power differential, emphasising differences and divisions and impacting upon the sense of self. Note the use of the word 'afraid' by Julia above. Though unclear to which students she is referring, anxiety about intercultural group interactions in any students can exacerbate problems of non-communication, concern about contributions to work and negative stereotyping (Harrison and Peacock 2010; Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern 2002).

Central to the issue of group dynamics and problems with shared working is that of communication. The next section shows how intercultural communication appears to have a significant influence upon the way in which students interact or, rather, fail to interact within groups.

### ***7.5.3. Difficulties in Intercultural Communication***

The ability to communicate interculturally is one of the components of the capability for *Social Relation and Participation*. Unsatisfactory communication within groups was highlighted by almost all students I interviewed and not solely in the context of language or nationality. Issues of communication included language, participation and cultural meanings.

Only one student, who was English, raised the problem of students not conversing in English, but rather translating amongst a sub-group, which impeded discussions. Yet comments from a couple of international students suggested that this was something in which they or their friends participated. More common was the notion amongst native English-speaking students that international students often – though not exclusively – tended to be quieter and less communicative within groups. Although some studies show that hesitant contribution can cause others to assume that international students are less intelligent or are unwilling to contribute (Barron 2006; Harrison and Peacock 2010a; Henderson 2009; Ippolito 2007; Leki 2001; Trahar 2007), at no point in my study was there any suggestion from UK students that they thought there was a problem with intellectual understanding; in fact there tended to be an acknowledgement that many international students were academically bright, and that problems were due to their use of English.

*I think the international students tend to be a little bit quieter than the rest. Especially in third year if they've only just come over from the Malaysian campus and they've all been together for two years. I don't know whether they're quiet or whether it's a language barrier thing and they are scared that, you know, we are not going to understand them. (Sadie, UK, IV, 01.02.10)*

*I suppose mainly people are quite chatty and friendly but sometimes the foreign students, especially if they are the minority in the group, are probably a little bit more quiet and they probably won't speak up as much. Then somebody louder will take over and they probably won't get their say that much. But I mean that can happen with English people as well. (Sandra, UK, IV, 09.02.10)*

*I think people are sometimes pretty scared. Even if I don't know the answer I'll have a go and it doesn't bother me if I'm wrong. People are too afraid of making mistakes and getting it wrong and that can also be a big barrier. But a lot of people have found that they can't communicate even when it's within our own age group and I don't know if it's because they lack the knowledge, but they just can't talk. I know there is a language divide with quite a few people, but most of them have got good enough English so you hope it would be OK. (Sarah, UK, III, 03.02.09)*

Accordingly there was evidence from some international students that they felt uncertain or self-conscious about speaking in groups – either because of the use of language by themselves or others, or because of the hurdle they had to overcome in feeling able and comfortable to contribute. Below, two students from Hong Kong discussed the difficulties in being able to trust that their English-speaking skills were adequate. Julia went on in the conversation to suggest that group activities be used as much as possible to encourage speaking English with other students.

*At the first two years when I was in A level I hardly speak because I found my English really bad. That's why I understand how a foreigner will feel because even themselves they feel that they don't have good English and when they speak they will feel really unconfident and uncomfortable especially when they are speaking to English people. People tend to talk to people less or they don't want to take part in other people's circles because they find their language is weak.*  
(Julia, Int (UK), III, 03.03.09)

*English people are polite the way that they ask questions is very nice for me, but sometimes I feel like the way we speak maybe can hinder me asking questions. Maybe even more of a problem for my friends. You know, some of my friends have very brilliant ideas or they could notice some mistake that is going on in the class, but they just don't say it! I tell them, 'You say it' 'No!' They feel like they [are] witnessing anyway. I feel that their English is good enough, but they are just not confident enough to express themselves in class.*  
(Jane, Int (UK), IV, 23.02.10)

Different accents and ways of using English made things potentially less easy for all students, again reminding us of the extra effort needed for successful intercultural communication.

*I think another thing is the language barrier because the accent; you can easily see that my accent is different from your accent. Sometimes they cannot understand my accent and that's the major problem for them. They don't understand what I am talking [about]. And sometimes I cannot really catch out what they are trying to say.*  
(Kimi, Int (MC), III, 02.12.08)

The effect of such situations can be that local students' verbal and language dominance again asserts their assumed position of superiority. Yet as indicated by Kimi above, local students too might feel uncomfortable in situations where they have difficulties in understanding other students, inhibiting their functioning with *Social Relations and Participation*.

Language apart however, three SE Asian students described how some students 'don't dare' or are 'scared' to voice their opinions. They had a clear desire to participate, yet found it difficult due to their own cultural norms.

*And it's not about the language barrier; it's about the culture. Maybe they feel they don't know that one; maybe if you say something wrong they would mind and they don't want to upset people. English people are very welcoming and friendly. I think they get used to coming across different people from different countries but it's ourselves who have this barrier. It's just a barrier in ourselves.*  
(Jeanette, Int (UK), III, 27.01.08)

Here we see Jeanette describing what she felt to be somewhat of an intrinsic barrier to being able to hold opinions openly and to speak out, despite the accommodating nature of other students, which is reflected in other studies in which students describe their desire, but also fear of speaking out (Clifford

2010; Osmond and Roed 2010; Zhang et al. 1999). It is perhaps in such situations that international students in particular are reliant on a supportive and understanding attitude through the capability of *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* in order to enable their capability and voice. We see in the following quotation how a British (Asian) student was sensitive to the difficulties experienced by some students and how his capability for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* enabled another student to be included and recognised.

*Last year in one of the dispensing labs the majority of them in our bay were international students, but when the demonstrator asked them a question they seemed quite shy to answer. I knew they probably had the answer but they didn't say much. I think mainly because of the language barriers they didn't say much or they were being tested and they didn't want to say anything. I remember one of them said the answer but did it quite quietly and the demonstrator didn't say anything, so I said that she had the answer and I re-said what the answer was and the demonstrator said to me 'Well done' but I said: 'She said it, not me'.* (Sahen, UK, III, 06.02.09)

This section showed how problems of communication in groups appeared to be largely due to feeling able to contribute or to be understood. This was expressed mainly by international students yet, as we saw above, at times the frustration about lack of dialogue was felt by some of the international students about local students who were unwilling to continue conversation when they deemed the discussion to have been sufficient. It is apparent that, although group work provides a platform for students to develop skills in intercultural dialogue, there is a need for them to be sensitive to and understanding of each other's situations, particularly given that the notion of expected and acceptable communication practices varies with culture. Successful interactions cannot be achieved without a degree of effort and stepping outside of one's comfort zone for the benefit of others in the group. Capability in students who lack confidence in communicating could have been enabled the functioning of fellow students with *Social Relations and Participation* and *Respect, Dignity and Recognition*, to encourage their participation in a safe environment.

I show in the following section how issues additional to, but undoubtedly worsened by unsatisfactory communication caused tensions and friction within groups.

#### ***7.5.4 Clashes through Different Approaches and Attitudes to Work***

Working in culturally-mixed groups led to students becoming aware of individual and cultural differences. However failure to function with *Mind and Imagination* and engage with those differences meant that their perceptions and experiences of attitudes to each other and to their pedagogic norms and expectations caused friction and difficulties. There might also have been a failure to recognise differences and behaviours as individual rather than



cultural. The main areas of difficulty which arose from the data were: organisation and content of work; and work ethic.

#### **7.5.4.1 Organisation and Content of Work**

Some Malaysia campus students were disillusioned with how the students organised group work in the UK, as compared to Malaysia campus. It was felt that students tended not to work as coordinated groups, but simply divided up work with little coherence. However most of the Malaysia Campus students appeared to feel bound to conform to the majority and to what was perceived to be the usual method of working. They sensed that their alternative perspectives – if indeed they were voiced at all – would not have been welcomed.

*So we just divided the job and let everyone go back and do their own part and then we will just combine them later. Whereas in Malaysia I think we met more as a group and we discussed more.* (Chung Jin, MC, III, 17.02.09)

*Well group work is quite different back in Malaysia compared to here because in Malaysia we know everyone and so it's quite easy for us to work in groups.* (Kah Yeang, MC, III, 17.03.09)

*They will divide the job and come back together - one of them will just put everything together and he will make the final decision and not the group. It's a bit different from how we used to do it when we were in Malaysia. We used to ask for people's ideas, 'Do you think it's OK?' and things.* (Myung Eun, MC, III, 03.02.09)

Their disillusionment with group work appeared to be partly through different assumed ways of working but also because of the smaller number of students and their familiarity with each other at Malaysia campus, which aided working together. Students in the smaller Malaysia Campus cohort found it easier to talk in groups during their first two years of the course as they were generally more familiar with each other. In the UK the group was so large that, as students were less familiar with each other, conversation was more difficult.

*I think it is probably down to the fact that in Malaysia we are really close and there were forty of us who knew each other very well, but when we came here we had to integrate and I think maybe because we are not that close to them yet, so we couldn't say: 'You go back and do this or that' – just tell each other. So somebody just combines everything.* (Chung Jin, MC, III, 17.02.09)

That this was a less than ideal way of working was also recognised by some UK campus students, who agreed that, at times, preparation of a group project or report was a purely functional exercise, with work being divided up and the outputs simply put back together again, without discussing or even appreciating a sense of the whole. Jennie (from Ghana) was quite cynical about it.

*Not in university anyway do I think I've got anything out of group work because it's usually meeting up for two or three minutes a day just to say, 'How is everyone doing? Good. OK – see you later.' And, at the end of the day, it just becomes independent pieces of work and you try to put them together at the last minute.* (Jennie, Int (UK), IV, 03.03.09)

She also recognised the large cohort size, hence unfamiliarity with fellow students, as an inhibitory factor, and also that effort is required in working with others. Large numbers of students do make for practical difficulties, but Jennie appeared not to have grasped the necessarily collaborative nature of group work.

*I think quite a lot of us – including myself – were not big fans of group work simply because it means having to make that extra time to reach out to the group and talk through the work and that means a lot of compromising about how you want to work and things like that. It is quite hard and because there are usually people you don't normally talk to or don't really mix with you find it a lot harder.* (Jennie, Int (UK), IV, 03.03.09)

The practice of dividing up group work which appears to predominate in the UK was felt to be somewhat of a short-cut approach meaning that work was done quickly but not always coherently, and caused frustration for the Malaysia Campus students who desired more discussion and exploration of the work, as a way of learning and achieving the best standard possible. Some felt that conversations were cut short and discussions minimised – even despite their efforts at continuing with them. Similar conflicts have been shown to arise about goals, methods of working or appreciation of deadlines and specifically the way in which work is shared, divided and managed within culturally diverse groups (Clark et al. 2007; Liu and Dall'Alba 2012; Osmond and Roed 2010; Sweeney et al. 2008; UKCOSA 2004; Volet and Ang 1998). It appears that, through a lack of capability for or functioning with for *Social Relations and Participation*, which provides the foundation for relationships, students were unable to develop their capabilities for *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* and *Mind and Imagination* which come through effective collaborative working.

#### **7.5.4.2 Work Ethic**

Frustration caused by other students' attitudes and contributions to group work was raised by a majority of students across the board. It was evident that there was a range of behaviours and attitudes from the conscientious students producing high quality work, to the lazy, disinterested or incompetent students who failed to contribute, missed deadlines or produced work of poor quality. Whatever the nationality of cultural group, however, there was some cultural association of behaviours when students experienced conflicting expectations, assumptions and engagement with work. The notion of work ethic featured in many discussions and seemed to be at the root of much of the friction and dissatisfaction. It was apparent that many students, through experiencing work with students of different national or cultural groups, held impressions or

stereotypes which were then applied to other groups of students as a whole. Overall, UK students were seen by Malaysian students as lacking in commitment and eagerness to learn. They were critical of some British students' lax attitude to contributing, group discussion and work deadlines, reflected in comments about their lack of engagement and lower standards of work, necessitating some compromise over what was felt to be the required standard of the work produced. Conversely, some other local and international students described Malaysians as being very diligent and committed to their work, though in some cases to rather extreme lengths.

*They [Malaysia Campus students] have got a really good work ethic.*  
(Simon, UK, III, 03.12.08)

*Well they [Malaysia Campus students] are very studious but equally we're not lazy. It's just different working styles, I think.* (Samantha, UK, IV, 05.02.09)

*I feel that the UK students are not so engaged in their work.*  
(Tien Li, MC, III, 03.02.09)

Students described group working situations which had served to create or reinforce these impressions. We see that the Malaysian students did see themselves as hard working but, in some cases, they were seen as domineering.

*We want to get things done faster but other UK students, they will say, 'Chill, chill'. Usually they mix us and in a group there are probably two Malaysians and the others would be UK students. We will have the different thinking between the Malaysian students because both of us are probably thinking, 'How can this be?' It doesn't make sense. They take their own sweet time, but we are saying, 'No, no, we can't take any more time' and so we have to, like, push them. But they will be, like, 'It's OK'.* (Chia Yin, MC, III, 10.02.09)

*When the mobility students came to Malaysia they were in a minority and so they knew they had to be like us, but now we are the minority so we try to cope with what we get. But last time they had to cope with what we did. When we ask them to do it actually, then they'll do it, but if you don't push them they'll just say that anything will do.* (Siew Lan, MC, III, 10.02.09)

*When we did the poster there was one Hong Kong student and me – international students - and the rest were local students and at that time they are not doing much thing, they are not contributing much for the poster and so I and the other one are doing most part of it. So we did most of the work – the typing, the ideas and the concepts – we are doing all the preparation work – and the local students are in charge of the printing and maybe presenting. We also present it actually.* (Tien Li, MC, III, 03.02.09)

*They can be quite bossy in a group and try and take the lead. There will be a couple of them – Malaysians – who know each other and they will try and take*

*the lead within the group. And when we come to meet again they would say that they've done all the slides; they've done this; they've done that. 'Well hold on. I thought we were going to do all this after this meeting', but they've gone away and done it anyway.* (Sophie, UK, IV, 05.02.09)

These sentiments accord with findings from other studies about perceived levels of commitment by group members of different nationality (Clark et al. 2007; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Ippolito 2007; Sweeney et al. 2008; Volet and Ang 1998). Although there could be some basis for students' impressions, they appeared to have a lack either of time or capability for *Mind and Imagination*, to see past the group to individual differences, as their views were coloured by assumptions.

Even when other group members had contributed a share of the work, a few students felt at times that it was of insufficient quality or not quite what was wanted – it was off at a tangent. This was blamed on different cultural understandings of the content and the way in which the work should be presented. As seen in the quotations below, it was raised by different groups of students.

*They will get things done but in different ways. I think they are not that particular about it but you will find that we will do it better or we will find it...not quite right* (Chia Yin, MC, III, 10.02.09)

*I mean they'd done some really good research but it just wasn't quite on the right stuff. We said well we can improve this sort of stuff and we felt really harsh saying it but we had to tell them that their work wasn't quite appropriate.* (Shaun, UK, III, 04.12.08)

*At the beginning we didn't know anyone from the group yet – they were local but we had three Malaysians in my group and a Hong Kong guy and between the four of us we thought the locals, they don't really trust what we do.* (Ghee Vui, MC, III, 10.03.09)

Assumptions of cultural superiority might come into play in situations such as these, causing loss of agency for some students and fuelling the development of situations of mutual distrust. Studies likewise suggest that international students' contributions can be dismissed as not 'conforming' to accepted processes and methods (Baker and Clark 2011; Harrison and Peacock 2010; Trahar 2007; Turner 2008; Volet and Ang 1998; Weber 2003; Welikala 2008; Wright and Lander 2003) causing, as we see from Ghee Vui's words above, dissatisfaction and resentment through feeling undervalued (Ippolito 2007; Trahar 2007; UKCOSA 2004).

This section illustrated how group work highlighted seemingly stark contrasts in how students approached study and work, particularly from different campuses and cultures, in terms both of their attitude and engagement with work and their usual methods and processes. Considering the above, it is

hardly surprising that some students prefer working with others of similar national or cultural background (Grey 2002; Osmond and Roed 2010; Volet and Ang 1998).

## 7.6 Conclusion

Group work emerged from the research as a form of pedagogy which has the potential to impact positively on students' sense of self, through its effects in promoting agency, mutual learning and sharing and the development of intercultural capabilities. Conversely it proved inhibitory when it resulted in dissatisfaction, separation and inequity.

Collaborative work appeared as a vehicle for development of relationships and intercultural competence in a number of ways. Importantly it forced students out of comfort groups and into conversation with others. For students this was not always easy, but they acknowledged that it was useful and was appreciated. Through the formation of friendships, and hours spent in conversations in laboratories, students came to know fellow students as individuals and sometimes found that they began to discuss issues of nationality, culture and religion. It seems that once students had the foundation of friendship, they felt comfortable to discuss more openly some topics which they would otherwise have avoided through fear of causing offence or embarrassment. The foundational capability for *Social Relations and Participation* opened the way to the development of other capabilities.

Students also learnt to work with others. They saw how they were challenged to consider their own methods of working and to recognise the value of other's contributions and alternative viewpoints. They learnt to listen, question and adapt their thinking and perspectives. Group work has the potential to provide a forum – a safe environment – for fostering skills in team work and organisation and an opportunity for students to share and develop ways of learning, thinking and communicating in an intercultural environment. It was a forum for capability development as they learnt with and about each other. It required functioning with *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* and *Mind and Imagination* in particular, to enable them to recognise the differences and the value in working with each other. Despite the range of experiences reported, students recognised the potential benefits of group work in preparation for their career and life.

With the positive findings also came the problems associated with intercultural relationships. Friendships within groups were temporary and soon forgotten. Frustrations existed because of different expectations of group members about methods of organising teams and producing work, that were sometimes readily attributed to culturally different ways of working and attitudes to each other. Some students told of rejection or domination by other group members and many highlighted communication within groups as a problem – sometimes through language, but also because of confidence, different learned behaviours or a mis-match in expectations. Students were lacking either in capability or

functioning, through lack of awareness, through their own choice or through choices made by others.

When group work functioned well it provided a valuable space in which students could develop their capabilities for their future professional and personal lives. Students could begin to experience aspects of a cosmopolitan education, which promotes intercultural communication and dialogue and a realisation of their own identities and backgrounds and situations in relation to those of others. Development of capabilities and functioning in some students simultaneously enabled capabilities in others. When group work functioned badly, opportunities for intercultural interactions were not only missed, but unresolved differences led to tensions and dissatisfaction, with the creation or reinforcement of cultural and national group views and stereotypes. Opportunities for intercultural capability development and functioning were not present or were not taken and, as shown in previous chapters, the absence of capability in some students thereby stifled functioning in others. Likewise the alienation and ill-will caused can affect students' attitudes for their future careers and lives.

It is apparent that there are immense benefits to be gained, but also that careful management of multicultural collaborative working is required, in order to create a system of greater equity and create a safe and meaningful environment in which students can develop greater mutual understanding and more cosmopolitan selves.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Concluding Discussion**

In researching the values and purposes of higher education and development of identities I have made a personal, professional journey. I have questioned the extent to which I am interculturally capable and how my capability, or lack of capability, features in my professional and personal life. In seeking to understand the situation of others it has caused me to examine that of my own. This period of doctoral study has therefore taken me from being a pharmacist in academia who appreciated the need to understand cultural influences on health and illness and to communicate interculturally, to one who has been challenged to consider the role of higher education and the part that I can play in opening up the choice for students to become more interculturally capable. I have been provoked to consider my own teaching practice and ways in which I relate to students. It has caused me to become more observant of student and staff dynamics and to start to think about the extent to which opportunities for meaningful interaction and reflection exist or might be promoted within my own School.

In this final chapter I will summarise and highlight the contribution my research makes to the application of the capability approach to internationalised professional higher education. I will show that I have illuminated how intercultural learning and the acquisition of intercultural capability plays out within professional higher education, connecting theories of cosmopolitanism and capabilities with the lived experiences of students in an internationalised environment. In summarising the main findings from the research I will also discuss potential implications for higher education policy and pedagogy and point to areas for future research.

#### **8.1 Cosmopolitan values in Higher Education through the Capability Approach**

Within current conditions of globalisation, which are tending to increase the contradictions between economic and socio-cultural values in education, and in which there is division and conflict through national and cultural clashes, it is essential to retain the public good function of higher education. In this view the aims and values of universities provide the potential both of a transformative personal educational experience, in pursuit of a fulfilled life, and of creating just societies through its graduates as agents of social change. Education is a process which helps form the identity of the learner; one that should embrace the moral as well as the intellectual development of students. Universities have an important role in preparing students for lives and careers in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. An education which enhances intercultural capabilities helps students to become more aware of the moral choices available to them as they graduate to become members of society, many of them in professional positions and able therefore to exert an influence within society.

At internationalised campuses the potential exists for students from different cultures to interact, become friends, and to learn with and about each other, helping prepare them for their global futures. Yet there is strong evidence from the literature, which is confirmed by the research reported here, that the extent of meaningful intercultural interactions is generally low, leading to dissatisfaction and disappointment for many, particularly international students, and missed opportunities for many to develop interculturally.

I have therefore drawn on theories of cosmopolitanism, primarily as developed by Kwame Anthony Appiah, for framing some desirable outcomes - expressed as capabilities - of higher education in contemporary society. I have linked this theory to consideration of how a reimagining and expansion of students' selves can be achieved through the creation of a higher education environment which fosters learning with, from and about individuals of different cultures.

The capability approach, developed by Amartya Sen, is a way of conceptualising cosmopolitan values in higher education. Drawing also on others' capability sets and my own data, I have created a new conceptual model for imagining a university education which pays attention to the principles of cosmopolitan values and allows freedom and individual recognition. This is the first time, as far as I am aware, that the capabilities approach has been applied to intercultural learning and the first time that it has been applied to undergraduate pharmacy education. Construction of the capability set, and examination of the data against it, has allowed me to express what it is to be intercultural, or cosmopolitan, through the four capabilities. It has enabled some of the values and outlook which are to be fostered through higher education to be conceptualised and framed. Examination of the data against the capability set proved to be a valuable tool for evaluating intercultural capabilities within the students, taking into account not only individual student factors, but also some contextual and interrelational factors which impact upon capability, functioning and agency.

## **8.2 Summary of Findings**

The findings confirm those from the literature, which are that, despite the significant potential for intercultural exploration and learning provided by an internationalised university environment, with its diverse mix of individuals of different cultures and nationalities studying and living alongside each other, spontaneous and positive interactions do not always occur. The student accounts indicated that such a diverse environment can have a detrimental as well as a beneficial influence and, despite a multicultural population of students, with ample opportunities for collaborative working, the intercultural learning gained by some students in my study was low. Unlike much of the literature, my study examined the experiences of both home and international students and has therefore tried to consider different perspectives on the common situation of being on the MPharm.



My research questions aimed to discover the extent and nature of students' intercultural experiences, and the factors which influenced their intercultural interactions and learning. The students' accounts provided a lens on their experiences of intercultural contact, but the capability set was especially useful in identifying the types of factors involved. The individual student cases, which allowed me to link experiences with intercultural capability level and functioning and identity change, helped to pinpoint some of the key and common factors. The findings revealed a wide variation in the intercultural capabilities of pharmacy students, ascertained through their accounts of their engagement with students from different countries and cultures. Although a majority of students gained some intercultural capability from the plurality of the internationalised environment, only a minority could be considered to have experienced a transformative opening of the mind and expansion of the self in this respect. Far larger was the proportion of students who remained unfulfilled and even disillusioned by their experiences.

The application of the capability approach has added to the research on internationalised higher education by providing a new way of conceptualising the situation from the perspectives of undergraduate students. Analysis of the data against the capability set identified some essential elements of gaining intercultural capability:

It was apparent that students who were highly capable in one area tended to be more interculturally capable across the set. The data pointed to the benefit identified by those students who had engaged interculturally: they had discovered enjoyment and interest through their friendships with diverse individuals and demonstrated the potentially transformative realisation of more cosmopolitan selves. Conversely, studying students at the low end of the spectrum illustrated why some individuals were less able to develop interculturally and how their intercultural experiences served to inhibit intercultural capability and constrain their identity and sense of self.

The acquisition of intercultural capabilities is effortful and might necessitate courage in order to step out of one's comfort zone. However, the students who took that step could see the benefit of doing so, and connected the value both for themselves and for others. Highly functioning students simultaneously enabled capability in others. They were able to engage with and take pleasure from exploring difference and, at the same time, recognised the common humanity within their fellow students. Students who were more interculturally capable held a more cosmopolitan outlook and had developed values which were important for the good of themselves, as pharmacy professionals and for society.

*Social Relations and Participation* appeared to be a foundational capability which enabled students to expand and function with other capabilities. The intercultural relationships and friendships created through functioning with *Social Relations and Participation* provided the basis for further capability development. Looking for evidence of *Social Relations and Participation* also

highlighted the distinction between friendship and friendliness between students. The students who formed close intercultural friendships were more able to develop intercultural capabilities to a higher level. However, particularly through the effects of group work, the development of friendly relationships reduced cultural barriers and allowed conversations and learning about cultures, differences and similarities.

The study pointed to the effect of initial sensitivity to, or expectations about, intercultural interactions. Mixed cultural heritage or previous positive intercultural experiences tended to enhance students' intercultural sensitivity and willingness to engage with others. However there was relatively little inherent crossing between cultural groups leading, in some cases, to feelings of exclusion, frustration and disappointment. Most UK students seem to consider this with little surprise and some ambivalence, although the data showed that the international environment could provide unexpected benefits for some home students, who were able to discover enjoyment and expansion of their world-view and identity. Many of the international students, whose expectations and assumptions were that there would be more mixing, remained unfulfilled to greater or lesser extents. However the data pointed to the value of intercultural friendships of international students, which were rich sources of enjoyment, sharing and discovery, through their functioning. Though not interacting on a deep level with home students, some international students found intercultural enrichment through their friendships, on a level which most home students did not.

The study has shown that group work has immense potential in enabling capability development by being a bridge to opportunities for students to form intercultural relationships and, in so doing, become challenged to understand something about others and themselves. However it is a forum which does not of itself promote capability and can have the opposite, negative effects of constraining agency and capabilities and emphasising differences. If institutions are to keep their promises of the benefits of internationalisation, they also bear a responsibility for promoting an environment which nurtures the development of capabilities, values and freedoms; the development of intercultural capabilities and greater cosmopolitan awareness amongst the student population cannot rely on chance interactions through casual exposure. It is apparent that purposeful opportunities are required in order for students to discover something of others and themselves, in both personal and academic contexts.

### **8.3 Implications for Practice and Future Research**

If universities take seriously their commitments to contribute to international understanding through enhancing intercultural awareness in their students, this should be promoted to the institution and to their stakeholders via their internationalisation strategies. They must recognise, and make explicit, their responsibility in developing (cosmopolitan) values through higher education. This is not achieved through internationalisation plans which focus on market-

driven strategies and vague statements about global citizenship, but through genuine commitment expressed in the language of cosmopolitan values. To achieve the potential for producing graduates with cosmopolitan values and intercultural capabilities, higher education must be linked explicitly to an understanding of this potential transformation of individuals and societies.

In capability terms, institutions should think of enabling participatory dialogue, including staff, students, university departments and stakeholders, for discussion of and consensus about valued outcomes for a university education. The aim is not to dictate how students should think or behave, but to educate for understanding and agency, enabling them to promote the good of others as well as themselves. A collaboratively-produced institutional internationalisation strategy might help underpin a values-based approach to internationalisation across an institution.

Institutional strategy needs to be reflected at different levels within universities, to promote inclusive practice throughout. If students are to be helped to recognise the potential of their cosmopolitan selves, then teachers must adopt attitudes and values which pay attention to justice within classrooms and which allow students to flourish as intercultural beings. Staff development activities should be put in place to help staff to engage with and appreciate the benefits of adopting and enabling the development of a more cosmopolitan outlook through their teaching and learning practices. Through participatory discussions they should engage with principles of the capability approach and reason what might be appropriate overarching and discipline-specific (intercultural) capabilities. Academic staff must become reflexive, knowledgeable and aware of their own relative perspectives; able to appreciate and engage with the value of inculcating cosmopolitan principles within their teaching and through their approaches to students and colleagues; and be open to change. Resources and support must be provided for teachers to research, observe, create and reflect upon pedagogies which enable students (and staff) to discover, through engagements with differences and similarities of their fellows, more interculturally capable selves.

At the university in which the study was carried out, the internationalisation strategy refers to internationalising the curriculum in order for students to become 'prepared and able to be global citizens'. It lists multicultural group work as one of the ways in which it is promoting internationalisation. My study has shown that including group work in courses alone does not lead to beneficial intercultural outcomes and that there is work to be done in structuring the environment in order to increase the likelihood of gaining the benefits of intercultural capabilities. Moving students from a state of low or medium intercultural capability to being more highly capable is important for both the individuals and for the fulfilment of institutions' missions to provide benefit through their internationalised courses and campuses.

On a pragmatic note, in an arena of marketisation and competition within higher education, the ripple of disappointment concerning cross-cultural

interactions that seemed to run through the accounts of many of the international students I interviewed cannot be beneficial for institutions. From a rankings, recruitment and financial perspective, institutions need satisfied graduates who will recommend them to others, particularly abroad, and who will continue their support as alumni.

At the level of the department or individual teacher, given the range and interplay of factors which impinge upon capability development, there is no simple solution to creating a university environment that fosters the acquisition of intercultural capabilities.

Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment should all be examined for their potential to enhance opportunities for intercultural engagement and capability expansion. For example, the scope of the curriculum could be broadened to include international content or examples; pedagogy should promote opportunities for intercultural interactions and working; and assessment could consist of a range of outcome measures, dependent not only upon knowledge of different cultural or global practices, but also upon group tasks, ensuring contribution from all members, or upon reflective accounts of intercultural group working.

Lectures should contain discipline-specific examples of systems and practice in different countries and cultures, possibly involving international staff and guest lecturers, or perhaps forming the basis for students to conduct research and comparisons, applying theory to practice in their own and other's cultures. Brainstorming in pairs can help students to engage with each other and overcome communication barriers.

Tutorials and workshops provide opportunities to stimulate discussion of both factual information and exploration of differing values, cultures, religions or perspectives, perhaps through scenario and case-based learning, helping students (and staff) become more aware of their own 'cultural' practices and how their own values are derived (developing the capability of *Mind and Imagination*). This would necessitate the creation of a 'safe' environment, in which students felt able to share information, appropriately facilitated by staff.

As clear from my study, group working provides clear potential for the enhancement of intercultural capability, but requires 'ground rules', set early in a course. Collaborative work should consist of appropriate tasks, designed to enhance students' learning. Multicultural groups should be assigned by tutors and the group size small enough to facilitate interaction between and contribution from all members. Capability expansion, notably of *Social Relations and Participation* and *Respect, Dignity and Recognition* can be gained through tasks which encourage discussion, compilation or comparison of ideas, and team-working. Although simpler tasks are more appropriate to students in earlier years of courses, substantial projects, which encourage deeper engagement with others, are likely to enhance intercultural capability to

a greater extent.

I propose that higher education pedagogy should give greater consideration to providing spaces in which students are provoked and enabled to develop as more intercultural beings through cooperative engagement with students with whom they would otherwise not naturally choose to work. The capabilities approach pays attention to students' choice to be and do what they have reason to value. Students should be given the freedom to engage with others in a safe environment, to be included and to have voice and agency and to see the value in allowing others to do the same. The study therefore calls for teachers in higher education to examine their pedagogy and construction of group work tasks in order to maximise the potential for capability development in students. Relating meaningfully with each other is a route to students being challenged to consider their position in relation to those of others (the examined life), nurturing a concern for other's well-being (a world citizen) and trying to imagine the perspective of others (the narrative imagination), hence evolving into more cosmopolitan-aware selves. By developing these values as undergraduates they are more likely to enter society post-university as individuals and as professional pharmacists with values, attitudes and behaviours which can contribute to the good of others within society.

This study, carried out in a cohort of students undertaking a professional higher education course at one institution, has opened up the potential for further research. The capability set has proved valuable in identifying pedagogical and social factors which impinge upon the development of a more cosmopolitan self through higher education. It has the potential to be used as a heuristic tool, applicable to different higher educational contexts, to provide a connection between theories of cosmopolitanism and the exploration and creation of an educational environment which promotes principles of justice, individual recognition and concern, and intercultural understanding. Examination of the data against the components of each capability in the set enables a judgement to be made about the level of an individual's intercultural capability. I therefore propose that application of the framework be explored firstly as a means of providing an overarching way for institutions to think about their responsibilities and the power of creating an open, transformative learning environment and, secondly, more specifically in other higher education settings, across a wider range of disciplines.

In conclusion I propose that the diversity of the internationalised university, with its national and cultural diversity of students (and staff), though bringing complexities and difficulties, can provide rich opportunities for nurturing a greater cosmopolitan awareness and sense of concern and connection with others. It is a matter of adapting and valuing the contribution that all can make and draw upon as students negotiate multiple and competing identities throughout their time at university. Pedagogy which focuses on how the higher education environment can be made more global in outlook, expanding freedoms and opportunities for mutual discovery can provide a richer higher

education experience and help prepare students for contributing to an interdependent, interconnected world as pharmacists and as human beings.

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## **Appendix 1: Interview Question Guides for Main Study**

### **1a. MPharm III and IV Students (Individual or Group) (2008-09)**

#### **Choice of Course**

What made you decide to study pharmacy?

Why did you decide to study at University X?

#### **Expectations**

Can you cast your mind back.... What did you hope to achieve or experience during your time at University X?

Have your hopes or expectations changed from those you had initially?

How do you think you have changed as a person throughout your degree?

#### **Experience of the Course**

What do you think about the teaching on the course in general?

How has it compared with your previous experience or expectations of teaching and learning?

How clear do staff make their expectations about the way you learn and the way in which you are assessed?

What is your experience of:

- lectures?
- labs?
- group work?

#### **Friendships**

How have you made friends whilst at University?

With whom have you made friends?

Have your friendships changed much throughout your time at University?

#### **Intercultural Experience**

I'd like to ask you about your intercultural experience. What would you define as intercultural contact (or relationships)?

What is your experience of intercultural contact

- within the course?
- outside the course?

[Explore frequency, nature, depth]

What sorts of interactions generally do you see between

- Malaysia Campus students and the original University X UK students?
- International students and UK students?
- Malaysia Campus students and other international students?

**The School**

Do you think the School has a role to play in promoting friendships and integration?

What, if anything, could the School do to promote integration?

## **1b. MPharm III and IV Students (2009-10 Semester 2)**

### **Overall experience**

Tell me about how you have found your time at university.

On a scale of 1-10 (one is worst, 10 is best):

- How satisfied are you with your course? (and why?)
- How happy have you been during your time at university? (and why?)

### **Learning**

What have you learnt whilst at university:

- intellectually / academically?
- personally?
- socially?
- about being a pharmacist?

What (or who) has inspired you on the course and why?

To what extent have you learnt about understanding and working with other people?

- as a person?
- as a pharmacist?

### **Professional life**

Tell me about what it means to you to become a pharmacist.

To what extent has doing the course prepared you for your career / for life?

### **Friendships/ Social interactions**

What do you do in your spare time?

Any change in friendships and relationships with others with within or outside the course since we spoke last year?

### **Intercultural Experience**

This is a course which is very international in terms of the student population, in an international university. Have you – or have you not – enjoyed that aspect of being here?

Could we – or should we - try to make more use of the multicultural environment of the School? Could you learn more about or from each other?

What is your experience of intercultural contact

- within the course?
- outside the course?

What sorts of interactions generally do you see between

- Malaysia Campus students and the original University X UK students?
- International students and UK students?
- Malaysia Campus students and other international students?

**After graduation**

What do you plan to do after graduation?

Have your plans changed from the outset? (Why?)

## Appendix 2: Interview Transcript

S B Can you start by just telling me how you've found your time at university?

Well it is definitely different. University in Malaysia was very, very competitive and our system of education is very much different so it was a large learning curve for me. And then when I came here it's very different again but it was much easier because I had that change before and knew how to cope with it. Again I'm coping with different kinds of students and it's more relaxing here – the fact that everyone else is not as competitive or, rather the competitive classmates are diluted by the number of students who are less competitive. But I realise that I've been slacking a little since I came here. I think the competitiveness has been pushing me to study – so I know I want to be competitive as well - but here it's losing that effect because everyone around me is less competitive. So I have to find my own motivation to study more! But university life to me is more about academic, and university social life and everything is a bonus but my focus is still on the results and study.

S B OK. There was loads in there! So your first two years, in the Malaysia campus, you thought it was much more of a competitive atmosphere. So was it like that in school?

That was a problem in school as well. I came from a Chinese school background and, again, that would be more competitive than just a regular national school. Because typical Asian parents, you know, an A is sometimes not good enough – they want you to be the best. But I guess that has helped me get better grades, I think, because they keep wanting something better all the time and we've just been set to think that we can always do better and we must always try and achieve the ideal.

S B Before you came to the UK were you aware of how competitive it was? You can obviously see the difference here.

I didn't realise that it would be much more different here. I knew that, from watching YouTube and American shows, they like to show Asian students as freaky and their parents always want them to get A's and the western culture is less likely to care about what grades they get. I'm sorry I don't mean to offend...

S B No, you're not offending at all – I'm just really interested.

That was the impression I had but I didn't realise that once I got to know the students here they really don't care so much whether they get first class or not. They just want to do their best and pass and that's it.

S B And what do you think about that? And you can be as offensive as you like, I don't mind!

I don't think that's a bad thing; it's the thing that is best for them. I think I just want to see how far I can go as well because for me I'm not just doing it for my parents because I want to know how much I can achieve myself and see how much potential I've got in myself. If it's not good enough then at least I tried. So it's a discovery thing for me as well; not just because I must have the grades. I don't know what my parents think; they are probably just happy if you know, just graduating and I get a job.

S B So what do you want then – you want good grades?

Yes. I want good grades.

S B And what else do you want?

You mean from the university? I want to see how far I can push myself and how much I can achieve by pushing myself. I don't think I will be happy just doing something because if I want to do something I want it to be because I really want to do it and I'm going to give it a hundred per cent and see what I get back in return because doing something half-heartedly to me is like not worth doing at all.

S B Do you apply that to other things in your life do you think, as well as your studies?

Yeah. At the moment I'm very involved with the Magic Society and organising a huge magic show. I don't know if you heard? And I've been spending a lot of time both on my project right now - which is my priority - and the other project in my life would be the magic show, which I really want to be successful. And because I'm giving a hundred per cent it's not just going to meetings and doing things only at the meetings. I do things at home and I have meetings with the president, who is my house mate anyway, a few times a week just to sort things out and work out how things are going to work; how we're going to deal with certain things. And I'm taking the initiative to do that and I think that we need to go that extra mile without someone asking me to because I really want to do it. The moment I agreed to help out with the show and everything I didn't want it to just be a show and I'll give it my best and see how many tickets I can sell. No, I want it to be a sell out and I will do whatever it takes.

S B Brilliant. I hope it goes really well. How did you get into the Magic Society then?

I don't know if you are aware but the president is a fourth year student as well and I met him last year and he was just randomly performing magic to students and everything and I just got really interested and I thought I would check this

out and find out what it is and I found that I really liked it. So I just got more and more involved. I've was there for a few months and then the secretary had to leave and, at that point, I found myself interested and committed to want to be on the committee.

S B So it's not something that you've done before then?

No. It's absolutely new.

S B So you got into that through meeting the other pharmacy student. How did you make that friendship initially?

He came to get to know me first in third year but he was also a Malaysian so I guess it was a very natural thing to do and then we sort of knew each other but after that we were looking for accommodation for fourth year and he was looking for housemates and I was looking for housemates as well and so we just came together and lived together and that's how we got to know each other more and I got a few more tricks and more behind the scenes stuff and that got me really interested.

S B So he was on the course already?

Yes.

S B Doing four years here?

Yes.

S B I'm going to take you right back to something you said in your first sentence now which was about your perception of education and you said that in Malaysia, in university, it was more competitive and then you spoke of having to adapt when you got to the course in the UK. In what ways did you have to adapt?

For example, there are just too many students in the class, and lecturers are different all the time, and throughout that one year we've had so many lecturers. I don't know how many, but there was many. Whereas in Malaysia campus there were just a few of them and you saw them repeatedly and we just knew each other and if I had any problems and I wanted to find them it wasn't hard because it was small and they can't be in too many places. But the lecturers here they are hard to find and I guess I'm more afraid to approach lecturers here because they are almost like strangers, unless I've seen them a few times before. So I worry that this lecturer is only here to teach me two lectures and then I'm never, ever going to see them again and that sometimes worries me because how can I contact them and things like that. And the students as well; the peer environment is just different. Before this everyone would share and if you didn't know what this lecture would mean we would just sit down and mingle around and start discussing. But here everyone just

leaves immediately and so you are less likely to want to hang around. You just want to stand up and walk out and leave as well.

S B So not so good in that respect?

Not really. I guess I had a choice to stay and do the same thing but I just walk off. So it's my choice really but it's slightly different and I think my learning style has changed a little bit as well.

S B So do some of your peers stay and talk about the lecture?

They do it outside the lecture hall but I've noticed that has happened less now especially in fourth year when different people are staying in different places now. Especially as we are broken up quite a bit so we are separated now quite a bit. Because we are just living separately now, especially, like, [place X and Y] because it is too far to meet up sometimes and we've broken up into cliques in the Malaysia campus but we are still more like a large group. That happened in year three as well but in year four it's got a little bit more.

S B So in year three you were separated, up to a point, because of where you lived.

In year three we were still very much close together in the beginning because obviously we are all we have, each other and then, in year four, when everyone becomes more comfortable we become more separated. But we still try and meet up and have, like, dinners occasionally, but hang out less now as a cohort I think.

S B So do you tend to be with smaller groups then?

I tend to be with smaller groups and less with pharmacy people but more with people who are living close to me, simply because they are close to me and I'm more likely to see them. If they invite me to dinner I'm more likely to go and that's how we become closer.

S B So are you living in the same place as last year?

No. I've moved out of [Place Y to Place X] now.

S B So who would you say your closest friends are now then?

My closest friends are just a few pharmacy students and my housemates – and we have one pharmacy housemate – and friends from the Magic Society because I see them every week. And I go to the Mandarin Christian Fellowship on Wednesday night and we have a few pharmacy students there and they are probably the closest because I get to see them regularly especially now that we don't have lectures. And others are non-pharmacy people who are living around me.



S B So you've got friends in terms of housemates, local people, the Mandarin Christian Society, the Magic Society and pharmacy?

Yes.

S B So has that changed from last year? Or how did those things develop?

My circle of friends changed. Last year a lot of friends came with us - non pharmacy people - and they just graduated last year and so they are gone now and there were a few key individuals that were very dedicated to keeping the group together like organising activities and dinners. And because they would organise the activities they would call the people they want and, naturally, we became a circle of friends and then when these people left we just didn't see each other as often anymore, but we still keep in contact and we still see each other definitely, but just not as regularly anymore.

S B So it sounds like you have quite a nice social life; different things to do in your spare time. So are there ways in which you think you've changed through being at university?

I've definitely become more mature. There was a lot of decision making, especially when I went to university in Malaysia - I stayed on campus but I spend my weekdays not at home and I only went back at weekends so that was the beginning of a more independent life for me. And then, when I came to the UK, I couldn't go back for weekends anymore! So I had to make a lot of decisions for myself. Even in Malaysia if I was going out I would phone my mother to tell her even though I was not at home but I just wanted to let her know simply because I am her daughter she would be more worried. I prefer if she knew than if she found out. In Malaysia if I'm just going out for dinner I don't have to ask her but, 'Oh we've got a fashion show at the weekend' so I will ask her if it is OK. So I would ask her last time, at Malaysia campus, 'Can I go here, can I go there?' But now I don't ask her and, in fact, I go out and then I come back and I tell her everything. But at the same time they are quite worried - they call me and I am not there. If I am not there to Skype on Sundays - we Skype on Sundays - but if I am not there because I am travelling back or something, they call me because they are worried. I update my Facebook and blog so that they know what's going on. And I've adopted drinking and stuff like that, like going out clubbing, but they won't worry 'cos they know about it. And I will tell them about how I made that decision, like my friends are going and I know what I'm doing - I didn't do anything funny and they are like, 'OK' - because they know that I know what I'm doing. But sometimes making that decision is difficult, especially in the beginning, but now it's become easier.

S B So drinking and going out clubbing is a new thing and it would be something unusual from what you do at home ...

Very unusual!

S B Can I ask who you go with in terms of the background of the students or their nationality?

You mean like drinking and clubbing? Only with people I am really close friends with. For example, now it would be at least one of my housemates or a few of the people that live around me and I know that they can take me home.

S B I'm just wondering what nationality those students are? Because people tell me it's a very British thing to go clubbing...

They tend to be Asian. Personally I go clubbing only during Oriental nights and during the international welcome week with international students because I've wandered off to one of the other clubbing rooms when I was there where there are locals and it was a bit too rowdy for me. I didn't feel comfortable and so I just keep it to the Oriental nights.

S B So you don't do the British clubbing scene?

No. I'm too scared!

S B I can entirely understand that. So what nationalities are your friends?

Malaysian predominantly and now, increasingly, Bruneian and they are very hardy types and so they are the ones who will say, 'Let's got to this; let's go to that' and we will just tag along. And a few Vietnamese students; Hong Kong students and a few British students from the Magic Society and a few British students from the pharmacy course.

S B And you would class them as your closer friends?

Yeah. Oh, and Chinese students!

S B How important is that multicultural aspect of your university experience to you?

I would say I enjoy it. To me it doesn't really matter anymore what nationality they are as long as the person is a friend and we can get along and that's fine. But the nationality also makes them interesting and, at the same time because of their nationality, sometimes I have to be careful that I don't give offence because they can be slightly different in their behaviour. For example, with Hong Kong people, sometimes the tone of their voice can sound a little bit rude but they are not rude - they just talk like that. They are just, OK, we don't care about that. And with British sometimes they are more likely to, you know, put a hand over you and do stuff like that and then we won't mind because - it would mean something if a Malaysian did something like that - but if the British do it then it means nothing. So their nationalities influence how we

behave around them, but I think I've learnt a lot from them as well like... sometimes I will ask 'Why do you guys do this and why do you do that?' and then we learn. That's interesting and it makes a good way to talk to them. Like, 'Why do you do that?' and then it starts a conversation.

S B Any more examples that you can think of?

For example, with my project mate {name}, he's local and at one point we were talking about accents I was just saying that he has a very clear, BBC, accent and then we just started talking about Cheryl Cole and Geordie, is it, and he started imitating those accents and it was just really funny.

S B So you can see that people do things because they are from a particular culture.

And I think sometimes it's very important not to take offence because they don't really mean it in the way like we see it like in a different culture.

S B Like you said about the hands and the tone of voice of the Hong Kong students.

They're not rude, they might just sound like that.

S B Do you find that you behave any differently with them?

Yeah I do behave differently. I would be more relaxed and probably more – I don't know how to describe it – but more [pause] I will let go of myself more because with Malaysian we have to be careful not to offend. But I find that the British don't take offence too easily; they are just really outgoing and they just take us as they see us.

S B You seem to be quite cautious of not offending people...

Yes!

S B ...and again that makes me wonder whether it's through having seen other people who behave differently in other cultures and that makes you see that in yourself - or am I wrong?

I just don't want to offend people in general.

S B Your friendship circle has changed quite a bit this year but I'm just wondering how much you see, in terms of interactions in general, in the pharmacy course either between students from the Malaysia campus who were here before or more generally. How do the groups work within the course?

From year three to year four we've lost the stickiness as a cohort and we're more likely to engage with the rest of the students and some of us have been

getting along well with other students within the course – other students who were not from the Malaysian campus. You can see them hanging out together in class and they go shopping together. Personally I've also grown to know some of the students that initially started off here and that was helped by my current housemate because he started off in the first year over here. And there was a group of closer friends from there and I've got to know them even better now and then we started going out and having lunch and they help me know even more local students.

S B So who was his circle of friends then?

His circle of friends were some British but some of them international but I would say most of them are – I know it's a bit racist to say – but they were non-Caucasians.

S B It's fine. It's not offensive and it's not racist; you can see it just by looking.

But they are very friendly and I don't care who they are but if that person is willing to be friends with me then I will just go along and be friends with that person.

S B Part of the reason I'm doing this study is because I can see that, as pharmacists, you have to be able to understand people from a whole range of backgrounds, social classes, different cultures and this is why I'm interested, because I wonder whether there is any potential in encouraging students to learn about each other on the course. I don't know if there is any scope that you can think of within the course whereby we could encourage more of that? I don't know.

It depends on whether people are willing to do that, I guess.

S B What are your views on that?

In the beginning the British students, I was surprised how come they did not take much initiative to come and engage with us but it also takes effort on our part I guess and even though we try it also depends on whether the other person wants to respond. There is only so much you can do about it. But what I found really useful – again this is Magic Society – we went for a magic convention just a few weeks ago in February and, initially, we didn't really know each other because some people come to meetings sometimes and some people don't. When we went to Blackpool there were just so many different nationalities even though there was just about seventeen of us but everyone just bonded really well because we're just stuck together for a whole weekend and also because of same interest and we just got along so well together after that. And at the end of the trip everyone just got along so well and was so buddy-buddy to each other. And that was really good and even though we speak differently and come from different cultures and different countries it

really bridged the gap by going on that trip together, but bound by the same interest.

S B I think it is important to find that common interest.

And I don't think there are a lot of people in our cohort who join societies other than, for example, Malaysian Society and I think, through my involvement in Magic Society, I realised that it really helps getting to know more people and the common interest really bridges the gap a lot. Definitely.

S B Yes. We've not talked about pharmacy at all. What does it mean to you to be a pharmacist?

Now it means so much more! I've grown to like the course and I really do enjoy pharmacy now ...

S B Now...?

More so than ever after all I've been through. I see the importance of the profession even more and I can actually see myself doing it even more, especially after my third year placement. Because I've had summer placements before and I just see myself getting the hang of it and I didn't make a lot of mistakes and I can see myself actually doing it without being horrible at it and trying to kill someone which is, I think, everyone's biggest fear in the profession. It just became my goal right now to graduate and when I finish off pre reg successfully I will be a pharmacist.

S B It sounds like you've sort of travelled some way to get there in terms of 'all I've been through' and 'that's what I want to do now' – you sound like this is very different from when you started out.

In my previous interview – I don't know if you remember - I did mention that it wasn't something that I wanted to do. It's not, like, since I was a kid I wanted to be a pharmacist - no it wasn't like that. It was because I liked the idea of the course and I needed to stay back in Malaysia for a while and then it just grew on me and then... It was a hard journey - the revision, the stress of the dispensing course and all that ...

S B I still remember the stress of my dispensing course! We all do!

My project is now my biggest problem! And having been through summer placements. A lot of things I do during the term for pharmacy; outside of term it's summer placements for pharmacy; also interviews for pharmacy. So it's a huge part of my life now and it just makes me want to get there even more.

S B What's important to you about being a pharmacist? Are there things you really value for example?

Through my experience in placements I can see it really helps people. Little things that we do could make a huge difference to someone and I guess I want to be doing something like that for years to come. I would want to do something like that. I've put so much effort into becoming a pharmacist but also, as time passes, it's not just about that effort anymore, but it's rewarding when you know that you help someone and seeing that you can do something for someone and that would make the difference.

S B And where has that feeling come from? You mentioned your placements.

Yeah the placements. People just coming in and saying thank you and, you know, you get regular customers coming in Boots. Sometimes they come in for medicines and sometimes they come in for shampoos but after a while you recognise the regulars and they just tell you that 'Oh I'm so much better now' and it's great when they say that. I really do feel happy when they say that and I like the fact that I can help someone by just doing my job - and getting paid for it is a bonus!

S B Of course!

But it is a good job; I think it really is a good job and I don't think that a lot of people realise how good pharmacists are to people in general I think. Even my friends if they have a common cold they will come to me and ask what they should do. And I know that I will be in the position to at least direct them to the right person and when I'm preparing for trips or anything I would know to pack the necessary drugs like erm anti-histamine just in case anybody gets allergies.

S B So where are you going for your pre reg.?

Oxford. With Lloydspharmacy in community. I did a summer placement there with Boots but they didn't offer me Oxford. They offered me another place in Lincolnshire called Louth, but I loved Oxford so much and when Lloyds offered me Oxford I just jumped for it.

S B How come you went to Oxford for placement?

Just random. They gave us the opportunity to give a few choices and I didn't want to go to wherever I was before and so I just selected somewhere - mainly cities but not London because I personally don't like London. But cities that are close to London, close to airports so that I can go back home. Somewhere with a good transport system. And they were: Nottingham, Oxford and Manchester. I think those were my choices and I was offered Oxford.

S B And do you have plans for what you want to do after your pre reg?

I will continue working here, hopefully. That's what I want to do. If there is an opportunity to do it then I will definitely do it.

S B Stay in the UK?

Yes

S B Indefinitely?

Not too long, I hope, because, ultimately, I want to go back home but I don't know when. I will be honest and say I need the money because I'm the eldest and my sister is gone to college now and the other one is going next year and I've still got a little brother so it would be very, very helpful to get the salary here but, again, I wouldn't want to stay here too long because ultimately the weather is not my favourite! I can deal with it now when I'm younger but I don't want to be spending the rest of my life here. I still prefer good old sunny Malaysia! Maybe I will stay here at least until they all get their first degree. I don't know; it depends. But I've been thinking – I know it's too early to think now - that if I can just get enough to get a house here and then go back to Malaysia and then I can collect rent in pounds every month that would be great and I wouldn't have to work! So that sounds like a really good idea at the moment. I want to do something else when I go back – not pharmacy. Maybe do something – because my mum wants to open a restaurant some day and maybe I will help her out with that. Do something different in my life. I tend to have the habit of getting new interests and then pursuing it – like in Malaysia campus I started with the guitar which I'm still learning right now and then it's magic. So I just want to do all things. I think it's a Malaysian thing – we just want to keep learning different things. I do realise that local students, they are quite impressed that we can speak a few languages and sometimes we can play a few instruments. I don't know why that is not common here but I do realise that Malaysians tend to get interested in different things easily and then will go and know more about it.

S B Well I can do two languages and two instruments but I think I'm doing well! It's interesting. I know that generally you can speak a few languages but it's interesting about the musical instruments as well. It's expected is it? Is it the norm?

Most Malaysians know at least one instrument. Maybe they don't know it well enough, but they sort of know something. Not everybody, but.... Parents have this thinking of wanting to send their children to music class after them going to school. I don't know why! But that's what happened when I was young and that's how I got to learn the piano. And then when I came to uni I missed music and the piano is not a mobile instrument. I that's why I wanted to learn the guitar so that I could play music here, so I got it sent over from Malaysia.

S B Any other comments you want to make?

I think it's definitely a very, very good experience; it's not something I will regret and if I could do this again I would. It's sometimes stress and pressure but I guess this pressure changes someone into someone better. I would say that I am glad that I've had a richer experience in life and not the one that didn't know anyone and was sheltered by my parents and everything like that. And I know that...I kind of enjoy having different types of experience really. I feel like I've learnt so much and I've become more of an adult whereas in university in Malaysia I still thought of myself a little bit like a kid because I still had to 'mummy this; mummy that' so when I came here I just felt completely like an adult. I think also because the local students, they behave like they embrace that they really are adults.

S B Thank you. That was great.



## **Appendix 3: Student Participant form and Information Sheet**

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Project title:** The development of intercultural competence within the MPharm course

**Researcher's name:** Mrs Stephanie Bridges

**Supervisor's names:** Dr Monica McLean, Dr Qing Gu

#### **Aim of the Project**

These interviews form part of the doctoral research being carried out by Stephanie Bridges, a member of academic staff in the School of Pharmacy, University X. The aim of the project is to study the extent of intercultural education within the MPharm course and from this, the extent to which it may contribute to the development of intercultural competence, defined as a change in skills, attitudes and behaviour. The Malaysia Campus 2+2 Pharmacy undergraduate course will be used as a case study. In order to carry out this study, experiences and perceptions of international and local students at both University X UK campus and Malaysia campuses will be sought through the use of interviews.

#### **Participation**

Individual interviews or focus groups are expected to last about 40-50 minutes.

During the interview notes may be taken and you will be audio-taped. If you wish to stop the recording at any stage you may do so.

Participation is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect your status either now or in the future.

#### **Confidentiality**

Information gained during the study may be published or presented at research seminars. However all personal identifying material will be removed before any such publication. Participants will not be identified and personal results will remain confidential. Any information you may give will have no bearing whatsoever on degree results.

Data generated by the research (e.g. transcripts of interviews) will be kept in a safe and secure location and will be used purely for the purposes of the research project (including dissemination of findings). No-one other than research colleagues, supervisors or examiners will have access to any of the data collected. Any data which participants do not wish to be used will be destroyed.

### Contact Details

Should you require further information about the research, you may contact the researcher or supervisor, whose details are given below.

Should you wish to make a complaint relating to the research project on ethical grounds, you should contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University X, whose details are given below.

### PARTICIPANT FORM

Name of student (please print)
E-mail
Mobile 'phone number
Would you prefer to be interviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individually?</li><li>• As one of a pair?</li><li>• As one of a trio?</li></ul> (Please indicate)
Please give the name(s) of anyone you wish to be interviewed with as part of your pair / trio
Thank you. Your participation in this project is much appreciated. You will be contacted to arrange an interview at a mutually convenient time.  Please return completed forms to Mrs Stephanie Bridges, Room C16a, School of Pharmacy Building

## **Appendix 4: Interview Question Guides for Pilot Study**

### **4a. MPharm III Malaysia Campus Students (2007-08 Semester 1)**

#### **Experience of the Course**

How are you finding the course at University X UK?

How does it compare with Malaysia Campus?

#### **Information provided by the School**

What information did you receive about the School at University X UK?

Is there any other information you would have liked? (What? When? In what form?)

#### **Activities organised by the School**

Have you taken part in any events organised by the School specifically for the Malaysia Campus students?

Some/all?

How useful were the events?

What is anything could have been organised differently?

- about events you attended
- about events you didn't attend
- Why did you choose to attend / not attend?

#### **Your experiences of University X UK Students**

What is your experience of the University X UK students?

What sorts of interactions are there between

- University X UK students and Malaysia Campus students?
- Malaysia Campus students and the staff (all types)?
- University X UK students and you?

#### **Social / Personal**

Have you made any friendships outside the group of Malaysia Campus students?

If so, with whom? Through what means?

To what extent do you interact with the University X UK Malaysian students?

Have your friendships within the Malaysia Campus group of students changed? How?

#### **4b. MPharm III Students UK Campus (2007-08 Semester 1)**

##### **Experience of Malaysia Campus Students**

What is your experience of the Malaysia Campus students?

What sorts of interactions are there between

- Malaysia Campus students and the original University X UK students?
- Malaysia Campus students and the staff (all types)?
- Malaysia Campus students and you?

Do you think the additional number of students has made any noticeable difference (positively or negatively)?

##### **Activities organised by the School**

Are you aware of any events organised by the School specifically for the Malaysia Campus students?

Have you taken part in any?

How useful were the events?

What if anything could have been organised differently?

- about events you attended
- about events you didn't attend

Why did you choose to attend / not attend?

##### **Information provided by the School**

What information have you received about the Malaysia Campus students?

Is there any other information you would have liked? (What? When? In what form?)

#### **4c. MPharm III Malaysia Campus Students (2007-08 Semester 2)**

##### **Choice of Course**

What made you decide to study pharmacy?

Why did you decide to study at University X?

Why did you decide to study on the 2+2 course?

##### **Expectations**

Can you cast your mind back.... What did you hope to achieve or experience during your time at University X?

Have your hopes or expectations changed from those you had initially?

##### **Experience of the Course**

Now that you have been here for a few months, tell me what you think about the teaching on the course?

What is your experience of

- lectures?
- labs?
- group work?

##### **Experiences of University X UK Students**

What do you think about the University X UK students now that you have been here for a few months?

Is it any different than when I last spoke to you and, if so, in what ways?

What sorts of interactions are there between

- University X UK students and Malaysia Campus students?
- Malaysia Campus students and the staff (all types)?
- University X UK students and you?

##### **Social / Personal**

What activities (if any) do you / have you taken part in outside the School?

What friendships, if any, have you made through this means?

Have you made any (other) friendships outside your group of Malaysia Campus students?

- with whom?
- through what means?

To what extent do you interact with the University X UK Malaysian students?

Have your friendships within the MC group of students changed since the start of the year? In what way(s)?

##### **Suggestions?**

Do you have any advice or suggestions for the School in advance of next year's intake of Malaysia Campus students?

#### **4d. MPharm III UK Campus Students (2007-08 Semester 2)**

##### **Choice of Course**

What made you decide to study pharmacy?

Why did you decide to study at University X?

##### **Expectations**

Can you cast your mind back..... what did you hope to achieve or experience during your time at University X?

Have your hopes or expectations changed from those you had initially?

##### **Experience of the Course**

What do you think about the teaching on the course in general?

What is your experience of:

- lectures?
- labs?
- group work?

##### **Experience of Malaysia Campus Students**

What do you think about the Malaysia Campus students now that they have been here for a few months?

What sorts of interactions are there between

- Malaysia Campus students and the original University X UK students?
- Malaysia Campus students and the staff (all types)?
- Malaysia Campus students and you?

Is it any different to when I last spoke to you and, if so, in what ways?

Do you think the additional number of students has made any noticeable difference (positively or negatively)?

Do you have any advice or suggestions for the School in advance of next year's intake of Malaysia Campus students?

#### **4e. MPharm III Mobility Students (2007-08 Semester 2)**

##### **Choice of Course**

What made you decide to study pharmacy?

Why did you decide to study at University X?

##### **Expectations**

Can you cast your mind back..... what did you hope to achieve or experience during your time at University X?

Have your hopes or expectations changed from those you had initially?

##### **Experience of the Course**

How did you find coming back to join the UK group of students?

What do you think about the teaching on the course in general?

What is your experience of

- lectures?
- labs?
- group work?

##### **Experience of Malaysia Campus Students:**

How do you think the Malaysia Campus students have settled into the course now that they have been here for a few months?

When I spoke to you in Malaysia you expressed some concerns about their integration into life at the UK campus (for example, teaching and learning, being in a large group, expected norms of behaviour in class.....). Were those concerns borne out do you feel?

What sorts of interactions are there between

- Malaysia Campus students and the original University X UK students?
- Malaysia Campus students and the staff (all types)?
- Malaysia Campus students and you?

Do you have any advice or suggestions for the School in advance of next year's intake of Malaysia Campus students?

## Appendix 5: Consent form for Interview Participants

**Project title:** The Development of Intercultural Competence within the MPharm Course

**Researcher's name:** Mrs Stephanie Bridges

**Supervisor's name:** Dr Monica McLean, Dr Qing Gu

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take  part.

I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.

I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.

I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.   
The information I may give will have no bearing whatsoever on my degree results.

I understand that I will be audio-taped during the interview.

I understand that data generated by the research (e.g. transcripts of interviews) will be kept in a safe and secure location and will be used purely for the purposes of the research project (including dissemination of findings).   
No-one other than research colleagues, supervisors or examiners will have access to any of the data collected.

I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research   
Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University X, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

**Signed** .....  
(research participant)

**Print name** .....

**Date** .....



**Contact details**

Researcher:

Supervisor:

School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

## Appendix 6: Initial Attributes (Sub-Capabilities) List

<p>Capability: For voice To communicate To express opinion To critically reflect To challenge opinion To participate To be inclusive To be included To respect To be respected</p>
<p>Seek understanding Seek reasons for behaviour Respect others and their views Question beliefs and behaviour of self and others Accept difference Accept disagreement Explore disagreement Seek to learn from others Seek to learn about others Seek to learn about others' worlds Seek to understand others' situations Contrast own and others' situations Do not assume own way is correct / best Recognise the value of others' contributions Recognise a responsibility to others Promote dialogue Choose to interact outside of comfort zone Challenge unjust inequality Think about own situations, values, beliefs, received knowledge, practices in the light of others' Take a critical approach to thinking about oneself and one's connectivities</p>
<p>Skills and attitudes which enable: Patience Encouragement Show interest Listen Communication</p>