

Meeting the culture challenge

Speaker 1: As a visitor, you are more concerned about seeing the sights, such as the Tower of London and such like. But now when you're coming as a student you're...the day to day issues, such as your clothing, where you eat, where the sleep, transportation, how you get to class, all these things, they become the major priorities and they become the main focus of your life.

Speaker 2: First time I'm actually going out by myself and everything, and (in the first I (got) lost in the city centre in Oxford. And that was my first terrible experience initially and then...And, well, in fact I lost at about 10pm and I came back in my hall at four in the morning.

Speaker 3: It can be, often be a case of experimental learning, trial and error; they learn by doing the wrong thing, by burning the kitchen or ruining the pots and pans. The sort of thing that we come across is when students don't understand how...when the rubbish is collected, when to put rubbish out, when not to put rubbish out. That kind of thing. Those things that perhaps they're so obvious to us that we don't tell all the students, you know, immediately tell them 'oh you must put the rubbish out on Tuesdays', that kind of thing.

Speaker 4: We had this great orientation, but then we were left on our own we were taken where we were going to live outside of Tokyo and then it was...that was it really and if you didn't have people there to support you then, you know, you were sort of stuck. And I...my first trip to the supermarket I just walked in and I just could not understand a thing. Even though I sort of could...I think I found pasta sauce and spaghetti and that was a life saver, I thought 'oh I can eat pasta and spaghetti for the next two or three years' but that's it, you know, because I just...the food was different, not just the language, but I wasn't used to cooking with those ingredients.

Speaker 5: The food, trying to find fresh vegetables and, you know, things that have to do with familiarity. Everything is different, so you try...I think because we have the need to find familiar things to feel comfortable or at home, you try to find what you are used to, and nothing is the same, the colours are not the same, the breeze is not the same, the tastes are not the same, the people are not the same the buildings, architecture, you know...