



INCLUSIVE PRACTICE CASE STUDY - 6

Transition support
Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program -
Identities in Transition research project

OBJECTIVE(S)

In recognition of challenges faced by Mastercard Foundation Scholars when relocating for their Program, and in response to Scholars' calls for improved and holistic wellbeing support, a joint research project arose from the partnership between the Universities of Edinburgh and British Columbia. The Identities in Transition research project, in which Mastercard Foundation Scholars were co-researchers, aimed to address gaps in knowledge about Scholars' transitional experiences, and the impact of these experiences on sense of belonging and academic success.

ACTION

The research teams at the Universities of Edinburgh and British Columbia investigated Scholars' experiences in parallel, using a range of research methods, including interviews, focus groups and photovoice.

Key outcomes of the research were: the development of mentoring (or reflection coaching) support, a photovoice book of Scholars' experiences, and a Toolkit for Intercultural Mentors.

LEARNING

1. Improved understanding of transition experiences

The research provided a more in-depth understanding of Black-African international students' experiences of academic, cultural and wellbeing transitions, and led to co-created support structures and resources to address these.

2. Skills development by Scholars

Through Scholars' roles as co-researchers, they gained skills and experience related to research practice, leadership, knowledge mobilisation, data analysis and academic writing. It was also an opportunity for self-reflection about their navigation of identity and sociocultural environments.

ADAPTIVE PRINCIPLES

- Qualitative research carried out to better understand student experiences and needs
- Collaboration and co-creation with students to address these needs
- Recognition of transition challenges and improved support
- Awareness raising and resources for staff engaged in (intercultural) transition and in-programme support
- Continued support post-transition

AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Experiences of academic, cultural and wellbeing transition for international students, and need for improved support
- Staff development and resource needs for intercultural awareness and support

BENEFITS

- Improved support systems and resources, co-created with students
- Active engagement, skills development and reflective learning for students

RESOURCES/OUTPUTS

- The University's Mastercard Foundation [website](#)
- The Identities in Transition [research project](#) and summary [webpage](#)
- The Transitions [Toolkit](#)
- The Identities in Transition digital [photovoice book](#)
- The (Intercultural) Mentoring [Toolkit](#), including strategies and case stories
- [Interviews](#) with Scholars and researchers on the Identities in Transition project