

**INTERNATIONAL JAPANESE STUDENTS:
THEIR EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING NEEDS
AT AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES**

By

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree, nor has it been submitted as part of the requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that it was written by me. Any help that I have received in my research and the preparation of this thesis itself has been acknowledged.

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.....

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ABSTRACT

International Japanese Students: Their Expectations and Learning Needs at Australian Universities

International full fee paying students make a sizable economic contribution to the Australian economy and the universities at which they enroll. Considerable competition for these students from the UK and USA indicates the necessity of meeting their needs if the Australian higher education market is to be preserved. Recent research has challenged the effectiveness of the currently operating Australian marketisation model that focuses upon attracting students and maximizing profits. International students, and specifically Japanese students who were the focus of this research, are attracted to Australian university studies for a number of reasons which are analyzed. The numbers of Japanese students studying at Australian universities have fallen since 2006, despite Japan being potentially one of the largest international markets.

The learning needs and expectations of 51 Japanese undergraduate and postgraduate students at two Sydney universities were analyzed using a questionnaire and semi-structured interview during their first semester of enrollment. The expectations and needs of these students had been shaped by growing up and being educated in Japan, a culture that values university education in different ways to Australia, and has different views on learning and study. Analyses of Australian academic culture, that emphasizes individuality and critical thinking, together with analyses of Japanese values and cultural mores, provided the foundations to guide the study and help formulate the questions used to gather data.

Results revealed a considerable proportion of respondents were postgraduates contrary to the expectation that the market is chiefly an undergraduate one. It was found that only approximately thirty per cent of students had come to Australia for primarily educational reasons. The other seventy per cent had been attracted to Australia the country and its culture, and had been motivated for personal development reasons and to satisfy challenges pertaining, in some cases, to English language acquisition. These findings reflect earlier research based on ESL classes. The majority appear to have been motivated by liberal education reasons, with explanation of the process engaged in, with so little serious preparation, perhaps best accounted for in terms of Hart's (1999) work on the hero's personal journey with its substantial challenges.

Results indicated that a considerable number of students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels experienced difficulties with a number of basic academic skills expected at Australian universities. These included listening to and understanding lectures, note taking in lectures, reading for assignments, writing assignments, discussing studies with Australian students, and group work activities generally that required public presentation and argument. The majority had done little reading or other preparation for their educational adventure in a foreign Australian culture, although many were aware of the fact that their undertaking would be hard, having spoken to other Japanese students. Relatively few appeared to have been influenced by family members who had undertaken international study. All had been admitted on the basis of IELTS or TOEFL standards set by the universities, but had studied English in preparation for their international studies for relatively short periods of time, with this apparently contributing to their problems with Australian academic skills. Findings indicate that most of these students continued to frame their intercultural experience in terms of the Japanese cultural scenario, leading in many cases to academic and socio-cultural expectations at odds with Australian university expectations of the roles these students should play.

Specific recommendations are made regarding the need for university policies to ensure that Japanese students are made aware of academic and socio-cultural differences and challenges before enrollment, and are offered programs that will develop specific academic skills. The analyses of the culturally-based academic learning difficulties encountered by students in this research should provide a substantial guide for specific skill development programs. Some of the expectations, that would be appropriate in the Japanese cultural setting, cannot be accommodated in the Australian one, and need to be managed prior to enrollment.

On the wider policy level, there is also a serious need to reconsider the standards of English required for admission. Recommendations are made for a larger scale, longitudinal study to be undertaken to address issues that could not be considered in what was essentially an exploratory study. The analyses of Japanese cultural values and social expectations, presented as part of this research, would appear to offer a substantial basis to assist institutions and staff to better understand Japanese students and their learning needs in the Australian academic cultural context, and to guide both research and teaching.

In policy terms, results indicate that there is a clear need to reconsider the marketisation model and spend more on support services for the students who have paid full fees. Results also indicate that the policies advanced by government policy makers linking tourism and university study are

relatively naïve, and cannot succeed without better understanding of the needs and expectations of international students from different cultural backgrounds, and better support services carefully tailored to their needs.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Australia's involvement in international education

Australian universities have had a policy of accepting international students since 1951, when the first cohort of students arrived under the Colombo Plan. This was a program designed to develop and increase economic and social development in member countries in Asia and the Pacific through students who studied at Australian universities (see Australia and the Colombo Plan 1949-1957, DEST 2006). Some 50 years on, major changes have occurred in Asian countries, Australia and the international tertiary educational context, necessitating a major re-evaluation of policies in relation to international full fee paying students in Australian universities. Amongst the major changes, as noted by Cobbin, Logan and Cox (1999, pp11-14), have been the move from higher education as an aid initiative to an export industry, and the deregulation of that export industry. These changes have resulted in large numbers of international students enrolling at Australian universities, rather than the smaller numbers of carefully selected students under the Colombo Plan.

The position and importance of international education in Australia

The market for international education is a world wide phenomenon and one in which Australia plays an important part, competing on the world stage for international students who have a range of options open to them. There can be no question that the Australian higher education system has a role to play in this scenario. Gertzel (1989, p68) argued that '*overseas students add a richness to our academic and intellectual life and to the wider society that no one would wish to forgo*'. In the higher education sector in Australia in 2001, when this study commenced, there were 86,271 international students studying in the sector on shore, 8.6% of the higher education market share amongst major competitors. Although in third position in the English speaking world, this figure was still considerably behind that of the United States with 582,996 higher education students (61.5%) 2001 – 2002, and the United Kingdom with 232,761 (24.6%) in the sector over the same period- (Australian Education International 2003, p7).

Meeting the needs of these international students studying in Australia, in order to maintain and develop the market, requires institutions to ensure effective learning outcomes. While there are valuable socio-cultural benefits to be gained from the presence of such students on campus, to date most government policy has focused upon economic considerations (eg see House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education, Finance and Public Administration 2007; Nelson 2003), and little upon ensuring effective learning outcomes. Current government policy

permits Australian institutions to set their own fees for international students, typically reflecting the actual cost to the institution of providing the program of study to the student. With the exception of recipients of aid or scholarship funding, the majority of international students studying in Australia are paying full fees. It is important to ensure that students paying a premium price for their education are also receiving a premium service, something that might not have always been provided in the past. Under the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislation, the provision of support for students is now a legal requirement. This legislation from as recently as 2000 may be evidence of government interest in the quality of teaching at the tertiary sector (Coaldrake 2000), but is certainly associated with the maintenance of a healthy higher education Australian education industry (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education, Finance and Public Administration 2007). However there is little evidence of direct government intervention into university policies and practices under the ESOS act to improve quality of learning and teaching, although less than adequate independent language colleges have been targeted.

The financial importance of international students

Revenue from full-fee-paying overseas students in Australia provides important benefits to the Australian economy and increased significantly from \$583m in 1996 to \$945m in 2000. In that year, shortly before this study commenced, the 153,372 international students across all sectors studying on shore had a combined expenditure of an estimated \$3,696 million. Of this, some \$1,840 million (49.8%) went to the enrolling institutions in fees, with the remaining \$1,856 million (50.2%) being spent within the local community on goods and services such as accommodation, food and transportation (Australian Education International 2001b, p12). As the number of international students coming to Australia rises, so does the income that they generate, with international students generating a further \$3.7 billion for the Australian economy through living expenses, with students in the higher education sector contributing \$2.0 billion towards the total (DEST 2002). On December 23rd 2003, Samantha Maiden writing in *The Australian* newspaper noted that in 2002, fee paying international students had injected \$5.2 billion into the Australian economy, representing 13% of all revenue to the education sector (Maiden 2003).

More recent research however, carried out on behalf of Australia Education International (AEI), has suggested that international students in Australia contribute some \$109m weekly to the Australian economy. The AEI research figures revealed the combined average expenditure of the 3,186 students surveyed to be \$1.7m per week, primarily living expenses. Whereas the cited

research covered all sectors, some 68% of respondents were enrolled in the tertiary sector (Elson-Green 2006a, p3). Globally, student mobility is increasing with students from over seventy countries identified, (Australian Education International 2001a). The importance of the income generated by international students has now been publicly recognized by government authorities, as for example by Brendan Nelson, then Federal minister for the Department of Education, Science and Training:

'More and more students are also coming to our shores to study. Our education export industry is now contributing more than \$4 billion to our economy and is the third largest service export sector - bigger than wool and approaching wheat'

(Nelson 2003, p. 6).

The economic importance of international students, through the fees which they pay, cannot be underestimated (see IDP Education Australia 1994, 2002), with universities world wide spending large amounts of money recruiting such students. Bruch and Barty (in Scott, 1998 p22) state: *'...international students are seen by institutions as adding both moral and cash value to the institution'*. However, recruiting and meeting the needs of the students is essential for success, for both the receiving institution and the international students themselves. Without identifying, addressing and meeting those needs, word of mouth may deter future students from entering that specific institution, and the enrolled students themselves may not have their own requirements or expectations met.

Competition and the need to identify and meet student needs

Australia is not alone in the recruitment of international, fee paying students around the globe, with major competitors being the UK and USA (see Chapter 2). However, irrespective of whether or not students are paying significant amounts of money to both their host institution and local community, cultural sensitivity is required to assist students succeed in what may appear to be a very different country. Indeed, if Australia is to continue to benefit both socio-culturally and economically through the acceptance of international students into its educational institutions, irrespective of the individual's personal reasons for being here, it is critical that the needs of the international students on campus are both identified and met as much as possible, since there is the potential for the international good-will, that is generated through their education in an overseas country, to be lost. The issues in essence are not new; in 1231 King Henry III addressed the inhabitants of Cambridge England thus:

'Unless you conduct yourselves with more restraint and moderation towards them [overseas students], they will be driven into abandoning their studies and leaving the country which we by no means desire.'

(Elsley & Kinnell 1990, p1).

The marketisation of Australian higher education

The emergence of what Marginson (1997, 1999; Marginson & Considine 2000) calls 'marketisation' in Australian education policy thinking indicates a need to re-examine higher education policies for international students. What Marginson means by marketisation is a strong emphasis upon the economics of higher education and ensuring enrolment to the detriment and neglect of important educational and socio-cultural issues. It is probably no exaggeration to suggest that in this model fee paying international students are seen as a means of subsidizing Australian universities (see Elson-Green 2006b).

This focus upon marketisation by Australian policy makers is clearly reflected in the recent report, *Servicing Our Future: Inquiry into the current and future directions of Australia's service export sector* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance & Public Administration 2007), which has highlighted the issues of competitiveness and market share. Recommendation 14 (p 120) states that: *'The Committee recommends that the government, through Tourism Australia and Australia Education International, engages in a concerted effort to promote, target growth in, and understand the importance of the interplay between international education and tourism.'* Here the definite intention is to encourage more students via tourism to boost revenue. Nowhere in the report is there to be found any consideration of educational issues, and what needs to be done to ensure an effective educational experience. Such an approach advocated in the report can only work if there are substantial support services provided to bridge the gaps in cultural expectations in learning. In effect the credibility of the Australian university sector engaged in international education is dependent upon the effective learning outcomes and overall satisfaction. The importance of meeting the learning needs and expectations, or at least managing the latter effectively if they prove unrealistic, cannot be underestimated.

'Needs' are defined in this research in accordance with the Macquarie Dictionary (2006, p1440) definitions as *'to be necessary'*, *'to be in need or want'* and the *'lack of something requisite'*, with the related meaning also important of *'a situation or time of difficulty'* as when experiencing the demands in a new culture. 'Expectations' are defined *'an expected mental attitude'*, *'something expected'* and *'the degree of probability of the occurrence of something'*

(Macquarie Dictionary 2006, p 742). In the case of the Japanese students in this research, the expectations are generally believed to involve situations and factors being similar to those that they already know, or have experienced in their own culture.

The need for a new model for Australian universities enrolling international students?

Higher levels of management in the Australian university sector assume that the marketisation model currently used by Australian universities (see Marginson 1997, 1999) is successful because of the continued attraction of international students to Australian universities and their graduation. There is also an overall assumption in government trade and university management circles that there are relatively high levels of international student satisfaction, because overall Australian student surveys suggest this, and international students still are strongly attracted to Australian universities (see Australian Education International 2008; Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations, Review of Higher Education Discussion Paper 2008, p35). The reasons for attraction are complex, now involving migration and citizenship opportunities, hence do not necessarily focus just, or solely, upon purely educational reasons (see Chapter 2).

Currently however there is emerging, fragmented, but important evidence from disparate sources that suggests that this marketisation model, that treats international students to a large degree like local students, and expends minimal amounts on extra student services to assist them, is not meeting international student expectations and needs as well as it could, and needs to be re-examined. This evidence covers issues of quality of Australian degrees, the English language proficiency of international students both before enrolment and during their courses, and the effectiveness of current efforts to bridge cultural gaps in learning and teaching. There are even those like Elson-Green (2006b), who has argued that the model which involves large numbers of international students to maintain it is not sustainable, given the possible changes in market forces, and the development of quality university systems in countries like China. Elson-Green (2006b, p3) quoted Jenny Macklin, then Federal Labor's educational spokesperson, that a number of Australian universities are '*dangerously dependent on overseas fees revenue*'. Other arguments advanced challenging the existing marketisation model generally have been expressed in terms of academic standards, however the issues are more complex, and also involve the clash between the learning skills and expectations that international students bring with them, and that are appropriate for their own culture(s), and the different requirements in Australian universities and the different Australian cultural setting.

The Australian government Department of Education, Science and Training report, *Engaging the World Through Education* (Nelson 2003), acknowledged very explicitly that threats to the very successful Australian higher education industry reside in inadequate quality standards. Cox (Cox 2004; Cox, Loggan & Cobbin 2002) in doctoral research found disparities in standards between university programs offered on and off shore, and that the international students in that study felt that they were not respected as people. The academic protest by Indian students at Central Queensland University, Melbourne campus, in March 2007, while seen in official investigations as involving academic standard maintenance (OTTE 2007), might be more correctly interpreted as also involving different cultural expectations and ability to perform in accordance with Australian requirements. The consequences for Central Queensland University have been substantial since the student protests, with the fall in their international student number reducing the income from this source from approximately \$150 million to \$109 million (Healy 2008). Resultant publicity in Indian newspapers, for example *The Times of India* (Banerjee 2007), has probably done some degree of damage to Australia's reputation as a supplier of international education services.

Tony Burch, an accounting lecturer at Deakin University's business school, the specialist study area involving the protesting students in Melbourne, however threw more specific light on what appear to be the real issues by saying '*international students were ill-prepared for the (Australian) learning environment, which emphasised analysis and debate rather than memorisation*' (Alexander 2008, p.2). This also needs to be seen in the context of recent statements by Eric Pang, chair of the National Liaison Committee, Australia's peak representative body for international students, that foreign students were '*pumped with misinformation from recruitment agents*' which '*led to disappointment and culture shock*' (Narushima 2008, p4). While Pang's comments were made specifically in relation to visa and work opportunities, reliance in the education industry upon recruitment agents, as has been done increasingly by Australian universities to assist in international student enrollments, can be seen as problematic at the very least.

Concerns about the levels of awareness and preparation of international students with the language and study skills needed for success in Australian universities, and potential lowering of Australian university standards with Australian academics concerned about failing students and the maintenance of the marketisation model, have been expressed consistently over a long period of time, certainly from 1993 (Phillips 1993) to 2005 (Owens 2005). These concerns have come from lecturers and academic support staff concerned about international students' communication skills and their abilities to respond to learning and assignment task requirements

at Australian universities. Despite these persistent, genuine and deeply felt concerns expressed at regular intervals over more than a decade, Owens (2005) was able to claim that her doctoral action research involving specific, extended intercultural communication training of lecturers and academic support staff, was the first systemic training offered to Australian university employees dealing with international students whose first language was not English. It appears that, despite lip-service to the issues (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education, Finance & Public Administration 2007: Nelson 2003), Australian university policies have not been developed to respond to the concerns expressed by personnel dealing directly with international learning problems and indirectly by the students who have sought help from these university staff, but to support the income stream in an era where government funding for universities has continued to fall relative to inflation and increased costs (see Marginson 1997, 1999; Marginson & Considine 2000).

Recently published empirical research by Birrell and Healy (2008), involving examination of the immigration policy and the employment levels of international students from non-English speaking cultural backgrounds, who had obtained permanent residence in Australia through successfully completing their degrees, indirectly raises very serious questions about the quality of the Australian qualifications gained, the students' learning experiences, their English language proficiency in an Australian cultural setting, and the meeting of their needs and expectations by study at Australian universities. Birrell and Healy found that employment levels of international students from non-English speaking cultures, which is an 'acid test' of employer evaluation of the university qualifications and the graduates' real abilities, in areas of high demand and skill shortages, such as accounting, IT and engineering, were often below the level of their professional qualifications. That is to say they were not being employed at levels commensurate with what they had been trained for and supposedly to standards set by Australian professional associations. Critical comparisons were made in this research with other migrant groups with overseas qualifications, and also Australian graduates, all revealing the relative disadvantage of the international student group studying in Australia. While percentages varied between occupational areas and cultural groups, in accounting for example, only between 22% and 25% of Australian international student graduates of different cultural groups found employment at professional or managerial levels, despite successful graduation and acceptance as skilled migrants. Even in medicine, the highest employment rate as professionals was only 40% for the 20-29 year old group (Birrell & Healy, 2008).

These research findings from Birrell and Healy make it difficult not to believe that academic standards have been reduced by university staff under pressure from the marketisation model,

and in dealing with students with lower than adequate levels of English language proficiency (Birrell & Healy 2008; Burch 2008). Since agreement in 2006 that English entry levels for university study by overseas students in many areas were inadequate, little has been done to rectify the problem on account of financial pressures on universities and the competition in the sector (Birrell 2006). In sum, there would appear to be serious problems facing Australian universities, and a need to develop new models to cater for the needs of international students, that recognize realistically that students from different cultures and languages need possibly considerable additional support.

Australian learning approaches involving critical evaluation and synthesis to produce a logically defensible personal position regarding an issue/problem tend to be Anglo culture specific (Morley-Warner 2000; Owens 2005). International students, who have learned appropriate learning strategies and approaches in and for their own cultures, do not automatically or naturally recognize the often different skills necessary for academic study and success in a different culture in Australia (Cobbin et al 1999; Owens 2005; Phillips 1993). It is an underlying premise of this research that the disparity between culturally acquired approaches to learning of international students, and the requirements in the Australian university culture, remains a serious set of unresolved issues that has not been properly addressed in university policies concerning overseas students. Ultimately, Australian universities catering to large numbers of international students must develop a new model that supersedes the present marketisation model, to genuinely meet the needs and expectations of international students, if the Australian university education sector is to continue to flourish and meet increased international competition.

With regard to the needs for development of new models catering for international students at Australian universities, the numbers of students coming from different, non-English speaking cultures is of such a volume (see Chapter 2) that it is now frequently possible for university policy makers to provide, in economical ways, carefully tailored introductory or foundation studies programs for specific cultural groups who may have specific, identified needs. There are also opportunities for the provision of in-service education to lecturers and academic support services staff dealing with international students during their degree or diploma studies (eg see Owens 2005). With an increasing number of postgraduate international students (see Australian Education International 2008), knowledge of student needs and expectations in one-to-one interactions may be of increased importance for successful postgraduate degree outcomes.

The need for recognition of the significant cultural differences between disparate groups of international students in Australia is important (Fallon 2008). Indeed consideration of how and/or why such student expectations have been constructed is essential in order to meet the needs of the students. Cultural sensitivity at the institutional level is crucial in order to develop an environment where academic and socio-cultural success may be more achievable, by students paying a significant fee for their academic program. Two decades ago Burke (1988, np) highlighted this issue by arguing: *‘University and college lecturers, like the rest of us brought up in the Western educational tradition are usually unaware of the significant differences that exist between cultures in terms of traditions and attitudes to learning.’*

The focus and purpose of this study

This research is focused upon university students from Japan, which was, until 2006, this country’s largest trading partner (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan 2006), an important detail in the face of the political and economic climate in the region in which Australia finds itself a part. Japanese students in Australia may be here for a range of reasons both personal and/or educational. In the absence of any substantial body of research on the expectations of Japanese students in Australia (see Chapter 2), this research will explore the needs and expectations of Japanese students undertaking tertiary studies in Australia. Due to recent changes to the Japanese educational system, which in 2004 saw the prestigious National Universities become incorporated bodies, there is the potential for the Japanese market to increase substantially as the tertiary sector in Japan undergoes major change.

The expectations brought by the Japanese students to their Australian University have typically been framed in the context of the Japanese educational system with an expectation, understandable but somewhat erroneous, that tertiary studies in Australia would mirror those in Japan. Such approaches to study in Australia are in themselves problematic since the expectations and learning skills that the students bring to Australia, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, may not meet the needs or expectations of either the enrolling institution, or the students themselves, potentially hindering effective learning. Cultural differences, such as the often unmet expectations regarding the support and guidance that an institution will provide to students as occurs in Japanese society, may significantly impact upon students’ learning at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. This research therefore explores the educational and socio-cultural needs of the participating Japanese students in Australian universities, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and whether their needs and expectations are met.

In undertaking needs assessment research involving the actual students themselves, this study is following what has long been regarded as best practice in education: that is of researching the values and concerns of a client group in order better to design appropriate learning experiences for them (Owen & Rogers 1999). Interestingly, while there has been a rich literature that has researched the views of the lecturers who have lectured to overseas students, especially students from non-English speaking cultures, and provided academic services to them (eg Phillips 1993; Owens 2005), relatively few studies have directly researched the views of the student stakeholder groups themselves (see Chapter 2). Given the long tradition of needs research in education, which has long been regarded as best practice and an important consideration in planning superior educational programs to increase learning effectiveness, this is somewhat curious. As Owen and Rogers (1999) indicate, such needs analysis research can also provide an important foundation for development of evaluation processes after programs have been developed, trialed and implemented fully.

The purpose of undertaking this research is to expand our understanding of Japanese international students' learning needs and expectations in order to establish more effective Australian university policy recommendations, and through these, programs. This is necessary to try to ensure that more effective educational experiences occur for international students. That there is considerable dissatisfaction with the present position is indicated by the fact that the University of New South Wales, an institution with a long history of welcoming international students, has found it necessary to develop programs to assist incoming students, both local and international, better to understand issues such as plagiarism and for example, how to use library resources through ELISE, a mandatory online program for all incoming students to pass. Without greater awareness of the needs of international students by federal government policy makers, and effective individual university policies to assist international students, however, there will be little or no change, given the marketisation thrust and the fact that Australian universities already are under-funded.

Whereas this research is not directly concerned with English language teaching, per se, it is concerned indirectly with TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). These issues will become important considerations at later stages in policy implementation, after this research into learning needs and expectations. In various ways this research is underpinned by the well recognized skill leaning and socialization models of academic literacy development (Lea & Street 2006). Moreover, this study is not directly concerned with issues of identity which forms a core part of the more radical academic literacies model (see Lea & Street 2006). The most comprehensive analysis of factors concerning human development, self-concept, and hence

identity, is that outlined by Mussen, Conger and Kagan (1965). They identified five distinct areas needing consideration regarding self-concept and identity formation. These are: (i) genetic variables, (ii) non-genetic biological variables, eg accident, illness, (iii) the immediate socio-cultural environment, eg close family and close friendship relations, (iv) the immediate socio-cultural environment and (v) the individual's past learning. This research will only really be concerned with (iv) regarding formative influences in Japanese culture and society and, to some degree, (iii) immediate socio-cultural environment, with these most directly related to the development of the needs and expectations of Japanese students studying in Australia. The other issues are undoubtedly important in day to day teaching and learning, but are considered outside the main focus and purpose of this study which is related to university policies concerning international students.

Jones (2000), has pointed out that international students become the future ambassadors for their host nation, particularly in countries of the world where word of mouth is important. It is important therefore for accepting institutions to consider the expectations its fee paying international students hold, regarding the role that both the institution and the students themselves will play in their own learning and educational development. Indeed, when international students enter an Australian university it is critical that the enrolling institution explore the expectations brought by the students with a view to both parties – the institution and the students - having an equal understanding of their roles and responsibilities, leading to the students having a better understanding of the educational environment that they are paying to be a part of, and the institution's expectations of the student. In sum, this research aims to establish the knowledge foundations for more effective university policies to assist the learning of overseas students and, symbiotically, the success of the Australian higher education industry for international students, specifically regarding Japanese students.

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The focus of this research is the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students studying at Australian universities. The primary educational experiences of these students have been in a country different to Australia, namely Japan. Section one of this review of literature considers the reasons why international students choose to study overseas and in particular Australia. Consideration is also given specifically to the potentially wide range of reasons that motivate Japanese students come to Australia to undertake tertiary education programs. Section two looks at Australia's current position regarding the acceptance of full fee paying international students, comparing this stance with competitor countries, and exploring the future demand for an Australian university education, both globally and from within the Asian region. The financial rewards to Australia are discussed.

Section three looks at the numbers of Japanese international students in Australian educational institutions, and with particular focus upon those in the university sector. Together, sections two and three highlight the substantial financial contributions that full fee paying international students make to the Australian economy. Section four then examines the learning issues and challenges for international students in the Australian university cultural context, with particular reference to Japanese students, and the long recognition of the challenges for Asian students in the Australian university culture. Review of the relevant literature in that section highlights what material is available and, just as importantly, what is not. The next section, section five, involves exploration of Japanese students' expectations pertaining to studying in an Australian university through the consideration of socio-cultural norms in Japan, both in Japanese society generally, and more specifically in education.

An important premise underlying this chapter is that the educational experiences in the country of origin, which are formed and controlled by the culture of that country, along with the actual culture itself more broadly, lead to the development of specific needs and expectations as a result of those education and enculturation experiences (eg see Berger 2005, Craig 1999; Lefrancois 1999; Mussen et al 1965). Understanding the expectations and learning needs will be important for development of appropriate policies, programs and mechanisms to ensure more effective learning by Japanese students in Australian universities.

Reasons why international students come to Australia

Understanding the reasons why international students seek out other countries such as Australia provides a general context for this research into the expectations and learning needs of Japanese

students in Australia. This section will examine the more generic reasons for students choosing to study at university in Australia, with a particular emphasis upon Japanese students. There is a large amount of literature available on international students and their choice of Australia, or other countries, as a study destination, but most of what is available in print or electronically is from a marketing perspective that considers the choice of a particular institution and/or degree (eg Dalglish & Chan 2005; Thorstensson 2001). Given the marketisation of higher education in Australia and other countries, this is not surprising, and, given the competition between universities for international students as an important source of income, it is probably not surprising that the major Australian universities do not appear to have released their research findings on international students into the public domain. However, it is somewhat surprisingly that it is relatively difficult to find print or e-sources analyzing specifically the more generic motivations of international students to study overseas detached from marketing issues, even from countries with strong research traditions like America and the United Kingdom (eg see Thorstensson 2001). This is despite a considerable extant literature on the benefits that international exchange may have for a host country, and even journals like the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, that focus upon social issues and globalization.

After examining an extensive range of sources, nine sets of generic reasons have been identified, sometimes overlapping or interconnected, as to why international students choose to study in Australia. These include: opportunity to learn superior knowledge and skills, reputation and quality of Australian universities and allied cost, opportunity to study and work in the country of choice, globalization and competitive advantage from overseas study, learning better English by studying in Australia, travel and life experience, skilled migration, social change in the home country, and personal reasons.

Opportunity to learn superior technical knowledge and skills

Among the few studies that have been located that focus specifically upon international student motivation to enroll abroad, an unpublished thesis by Bornszstein (1986) looked at the reasons for students applying to graduate programs in the USA. It was found that the two chief motives involved, first, the opportunities for professional and academic growth, and second, the availability of advanced educational resources and instructional technology equipment. In a later report into international student exchange from an American perspective, LaPidus (1994, p1) indicated the 'combination of quality and availability continues to make graduate education, particularly in the technical and business fields, a magnet for attracting students who wish to pursue careers in these fields'. These advantages generally seem to be assumed in most of the

Australian literature, for example the *Servicing our Future Report* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economic, Finance and Public Administration 2007), and thus although the Bornszstein study was carried out more than two decades ago, it and the LaPidus report, set out the major choice criteria that appear to have been accepted as underpinning student choice and current Australian policy thinking (also see Nelson 2003).

In Australia the implementation of the Colombo Plan in the 1950s and 1960s provides a specific example of the importance of these criteria (Cobbin et al 1999). Under this Plan, students from south-east Asian countries studied in Australia because many of these countries, such as Malaya, Singapore and Cambodia, did not have extensive, well established university systems at this period. This Plan is of historical importance as a forerunner to the larger scale marketisation of degrees and courses to international students (Cobbin et al 1999). However, it is important to recognize that countries such as China, Japan and Korea and India, have old, well established and reputable universities themselves, although these countries have been the source of considerable student numbers for Australia over the past decades (see Birrell & Healy 2008, and below).

With specific regard to Japan and the Japanese students who are the focus of this study, currently fifty percent of high school graduates can be expected to continue on to one of Japan's 704 universities, not all of serious standing (Barke et al 2002b; Da Silva & McInerney 2005) or, five hundred and eighty five Junior Colleges (Barke et al 2002b). Twenty percent of applicants will enter one of Japan's ninety seven prestigious national universities (Barke et al 2002b, p8). Japan is a major, industrialized nation and the economic strength and technological superiority of Japan particularly in the late 1980s – early 1990s, and currently in media technology, would suggest that studying overseas would not necessarily provide superior knowledge and skills to those already available in Japan. In effect there would appear to be multiple, and other reasons than technical skills knowledge, involved in choice of Australia as a study destination for Japanese students, as for many students.

Reputation, quality and cost of Australian universities

The strong academic reputation of many Australian universities, and Australian education generally, is an important prerequisite for students deciding to study in Australia (Lawrence Doorbar & Associates 1998). It has been an important factor in the successful marketisation of Australian higher education since the early 1990s (Cobbin et al 1999; Marginson 1999). In terms of basic marketing, there needs to be a product that is perceived by potential consumers as having some particular value. The effectiveness of the Colombo Plan would seem to have

provided evidence of the value of Australian university education, with anecdotal evidence existing that now up to three generations of students in some Asian families have enrolled at some Australian universities on the basis of the educational experience stemming from the Colombo Plan. Government documents (Nelson 2003) expressing concern for maintenance of academic quality reinforces the importance of reputation of a university as a variable in student choice, as does the evidence of a downturn in the Indian student market for at least one Australian university (see Healy 2008).

Associated with quality in conventional marketing is the issue of cost. Conventionally quality and cost are co-related considerations, with cost needing to be related to the perceived quality of goods and services. International students are not only paying full university fees in Australia, they are also required to maintain themselves whilst here. Expenses for rent, food, clothing and travel are additional costs beyond fees that must be considered by potential applicants. This additional spending has important benefits for the Australian economy in addition to the support of Australian universities (see below). However this total cost of fees and living expenses generally has to be paid in Australian dollars from another country. For these reasons, the relative exchange rate of the Australian dollar is an important factor in the decision-making process for many international students, but probably more particularly their parents who are likely to be the ones who are providing the funds (see Baas 2006; Piller & Takahashi 2006). Exchange rates of a foreign currency, relative to Australia's competitors such as the UK and USA in the international student market, are likely to be important at the time at which a decision is made by international students and their parents (Cambourne 2008; Maslen 2005), although availability of part time work for students will partially offset exchange rate issues. The major Australian service information agencies for recruitment of international students, like Australian Education International, tend to base their explanations of student number fluctuations on the Australian dollar exchange rates.

Opportunity to travel and study: Australian government provisions

The Colombo Plan was in part political in purpose to help develop south-east Asian countries, using Anglo-centric models that were believed to assist in the development of more stable nations. There are of course wider benefits that occur from having international students study in a host country, particularly in relation to increased communication and trade contacts and greater cultural sensitivity, which have been seen as important in an era of trade globalization (eg see Spring 2008; Thorstenson 2001) . Political considerations, underlying the creation by the Australian federal government of mechanisms to foster opportunities for Asian students to study

in Australia, have been seen as part of a deliberate strategy by some American analysts to foster greater trade and other relations with Asian countries, for specifically Australian economic and political benefits (Wuduun, 1990).

Government regulations, requirements for student visas and opportunities for part-time employment have created opportunities for international students who can meet the requirements, but these are clearly linked to national interest, especially in terms of the marketisation of higher education services. Given the quite high costs of full fees for international students, along with living costs, many international students need to work part-time to augment parental/family financial assistance. There is for example evidence that on-shore universities that are centred in major cities, where there is strong presence of culturally relevant cuisines and restaurants, have attracted high number of international students, whereas universities sited in country areas with limited employment opportunities, have been less successful. Some universities, like Central Queensland University, have deliberately established satellite campuses in major cities to capitalize upon this. There are numerous Australian government documents which provide evidence that provision of visas and opportunities for study and work in Australia are seen to be clearly linked to national financial benefits, and that these issues have strongly influenced government policies (eg House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration 2007; Nelson 2003).

A relatively un-researched area, in relation to this set of factors, is the aspirations of parents to encourage and subsidize their children to come to Australia as international students (see Baas 2006; Piller & Takahshi 2006). No research has been located that closely examines the aspirations of parents of international students, and the influence of these upon the decision to study in Australia. Just as Australians in succeeding generations have become increasingly aware of the benefits of education for social advancement and greater income opportunities, it is highly likely parallel thinking has occurred throughout developing Asian countries, and that has helped create this higher education market (see Baas 2006; McVeigh 2004). Apart from former Colombo Plan countries, some other governments, especially that of Japan, provide subsidies for students to study internationally in line with their globalization objectives (see Student Services Division, MEXT 2004).

Globalization and competitive advantage from international study

Over the past decade, the impacts of globalization have influenced international students' educational choices at universities to a very considerable degree according to Spring (2008), who has produced a major review of the literature in the area. Indeed globalization, and what may be

regarded as almost a synonym by many, internationalization (see Hanna & Latchem 2002), are widely used as explanations for the changes in education and the global market in education. (For example, see the contents 2000-2008 of the *Journal of International Education*.) Yet there need to be degrees of caution in attributing motivational choices of international students to globalization. This is because the term, like internationalization, covers many different factors and influences and loose use of these generic terms may be concealing different, important issues. Spring (2008) has argued convincingly that the term 'globalization' covers a variety of theoretical perspectives ranging from world culture, world systems, postcolonial and culturist, and issues of considerable complexity. In any case, Marginson and Sawir (2005) rightly draw attention to the fact that most analyses of the forces of globalization on education fail to consider the importance of individual agency and choice.

Globalization of world trade has resulted in financial benefits stemming from greater volumes of trade to the different countries involved, and greater mobility on account of multinational companies. In Japan, for example, the Japanese government has been promoting the advantages of internationalization since the 1980s (Kubota 2002), and many other Asian countries have also clearly been aware of the advantages, given the numbers of Chinese, Malaysian, Indian and Korean students who have studied in Australia (Birrell & Healy 2008). Changes to the nature of the trade, in the forms of services and information technology bases, have led to what is generally accepted as the knowledge economy (Spring 2008). The different forms of media have led to greater access to materials revealing how different cultural groups live, work and think, especially of the more technologically advanced cultures, with this in turn giving rise to arguments concerning a world culture and cultural imperialism (Spring 2008). Lifestyles portrayed via the various media almost certainly give rise to curiosity about other cultures, and the desire to sample other ways of living, especially amongst the youth of different countries who are in the process of choosing appropriate adult values, and skills and knowledge, along with educational qualifications for employment in the future. These factors and issues have long been recognized as important in adolescent/adult development (eg see Mussen et al 1965).

Global migration of workers has intensified and there have been increased demands for understanding associated with multiculturalism, with English having emerged as the global language of science and business. There has also been increased awareness of the need for lifelong learning and a sound university education to assist in gaining and maintaining employment (Spring 2008). Given the demands for greater multicultural understanding and facility in the use of English as the language of business and commerce, university study in an English speaking country like Australia with a well regarded, quality university system has

become increasingly attractive to students in a variety of countries, but especially Asian countries with developing infrastructure, trade and business sectors. As Spring (2008, p 337) states: '*Discourses about the knowledge economy focus on the necessity of educating students with skills for the global workplace*'. Those cultures which have been seen as the most financially successful and technologically advanced, such as Australia and the USA, will appeal to international students aware of the nature of globalization and ongoing change.

Learning better English language skills in Australia

With English having become the dominant language of business and science (Spring 2008), there accrue additional advantages to those who develop English language proficiency if they wish to benefit from the globalization of business and commerce. Any Monday's job section of *The Japan Times* will attest that speaking a second language - English though choice - will assist in finding employment within a range of fields. English has in effect become the international language for business affairs and communication on the internet, and the value of fluency in English is widely recognized (eg Editorial, *The Japan Times*, Oct 2 1997, p.20).

Japan introduced a policy to ensure more English language acquisition in 2003, with this government action indicating the importance placed upon the acquisition of English language proficiency in that trading nation (Kubota 2002). Australia, being a country in which English is effectively the official language of instruction in universities, thus offers the advantage of studying in English and presumably the improvement of English language skills to international students. The assumption appears to be that immersion in English speaking Australian culture, the standards at Australian universities, and using English in study will improve international students' English language skills. English skill requirements are set by most universities in terms of (generally) IELTS scores to supposedly guarantee a starting base, but the adequacy of levels set for university entry, and those needed set for academic success, have been openly questioned (Burch 2008; Phillips 1993; Owens 2005). Moreover, research findings by Birrell (Birrell 2006; Birrell & Healy 2008) into employment of international students granted permanent residency on account to their Australian qualifications in skill shortage areas like accounting, engineering and IT, effectively challenges the standards operative in Australian universities and the notion that English language skills are being developed in the degrees enrolled in to levels adequate for effective employment in the Australian community in their university specialization(s).

Skilled migration

Due to pressures from Australian employers unable to fill skilled positions in an expanding economy, the Australian federal government in the past decade has increasingly used skilled

migration policy as means of overcoming Australian labour shortages (Birrell & Healy 2008). This has led to many international students being granted permanent residency on the basis of their Australian university qualifications, in areas identified as involving critical shortages. Such policies may create considerable motivation for international students to study in Australia. Research by Baas (2006) indicates that 33% of the international students who completed their course in 2003 obtained a permanent resident visa. The effectiveness of the Australian government's policies currently operating in relieving the skilled labour shortages has been seriously questioned (Birrell & Healy 2008), yet the existence of such policies, and the possibility of permanent residency as a result of gaining Australian qualifications, must be seen as a decided attraction for some students, given the numbers of international students who have successfully gained permanent residency. This may be particularly the case for students from developing countries with a relatively lower standard of living and more competition for employment such as India, or possibly even Japan with an economy which has been largely stagnant or subject to low economic growth since the deflation of the 'bubble' economy in the early 1980s (see Baas 2006; Kubota 2002; Norrie 2008a & b, and below). Such circumstances create a situation substantially different from the spirit of the historic Colombo Plan, where students were expected to return and contribute to the development of their own culture and country.

Social change in the home country

Related to aspects of skilled migration, and also globalization, is the issue of social change in the home country. Forces of change that are unleashed from a variety of sources, but particularly government policies, may cause students to decide to become international students and so gain additional skills to compete in the home country, or possibly in the globalized labour market. The success of the Colombo Plan in Australia was due in part to recognition, by developing countries covered by the scheme in south-east Asia, of the need to send students abroad to learn specific skills. The rapid and sophisticated industrialization of developing Asian countries, and the growth in personal wealth, in especially India, Korea and China, has opened up opportunities for employment and travel.

Japan is undergoing major social changes, if not a cultural revolution, with major changes occurring in relation to recognition of the need in that country for skilled migration on account of low birth rates combined with an ageing population, and also recognition of the importance of individual and Western values (Norrie 2008a). The policy decision by Japan's government, to ensure English is taught widely in Japan to assist Japanese compete more effectively in a

globalized economy (Kubota 2002), is also symptomatic of a social change issue that is likely to increase the desire by some Japanese students to study English in Australia. There have been substantial changes in the structuring and management of Japan's universities, that have been subject to Japanese government pressures to change in the ways that Australian universities were similarly pressured by Australian governments since the early 1990s (see Barke et al 2002a). Japanese universities, for example, tend to look to Australian universities for advice and guidance regarding areas and issues such as facilities management, financial systems, student accommodation, migrant language programs, and internationalization strategies at both the institutional and curricular level (see Barke et al 2002a).

For the Japanese of today, the move to study overseas may be influenced by an increasing need, somewhat like their Meiji forefathers, 'to learn' or experience how the rest of the world lives. The Japanese economy has been struggling to regain economic strength since the end of the 1980s Japanese 'bubble economy' (Norrie 2008b), and this has created social tensions. Economic imperatives, driven by deflationary pressures and rising unemployment rates for over a decade (see Cameron 2005, pp36-37), have been powerful motivators to seek other knowledge and ways of managing situations and societies. Currently in Japan in 2008 the proportion of part-time workers is 44%, up from 38% in 2000. There are ten million Japanese earning less than two million yen (Aust.\$24,000) and, given the levels of poverty and lack of permanent employment opportunities, the Japanese Communist Party is enjoying a resurgence (Norrie 2008b). There are also reasons to consider the youth culture and generational change as important factors influencing choice of study internationally: these issues are dealt with separately, later in this literature review relating to changes in Japanese social values.

Travel and life experience

Increasing globalization and the tendency to international employment have probably accentuated a long existing desire amongst secondary school leavers to combine tertiary study and travel. Various media have long been used to promote Australia as a tourist destination, with the Australian federal government and various state agencies spending large amounts on tourism promotion. Japan, through the 1990s and into the early years of the twenty first century was a particular target, especially regarding honeymooning couples. Japanese businesses became substantial partners or owners of holiday/hotel accommodation and duty free shops during this period, especially in Queensland, and would have been also promoting this destination within Japan, thus creating, through advertising, the desirability of Australia as a travel experience within Japan and from Japanese advertising sources.

The motivation for extending personal experiences during tertiary study and the attainment of adulthood is well recognized almost universally, with universities in many different countries for many years including opportunities for overseas exchange study experiences. Generally earlier schemes allowed student to study a restricted range of similar subjects appropriate for their degree at another university in another country, provided there was a partnership agreement with the other university. Now many universities, for example the University of Technology, Sydney, offer and proudly advertise specialist degrees in International Studies, with the additional study being recognized as part of the degree title. Advantages for employment, stemming from acquiring skills relevant to a globalized economy, combine with the desire of many to travel and experience the world more broadly, probably reinforcing both forms of motivation. The opportunities to combine travel and study have also been extended to the secondary level as a number of countries, but particularly the UK, has expanded their educational markets to focus increasingly upon secondary study opportunities, particularly for Japanese students. The clear intent is that then students will remain and progress to British tertiary institutions, having learned more about Anglo learning cultures and expectations (UK-Japan School Links Handbook, nd).

Many cultures, including the Japanese, have traditions of individuals choosing to explore other cultures and experiences and to study overseas. The impetus for this probably springs from many complex sources but most, if not all, cultures have stories and myths about explorers. Hart (1999) in an article, *The Intercultural Sojourn as the Hero's Journey*, drawing upon earlier work by Campbell, provides interesting insights drawn from myth, intercultural communication and psychology, and compares various models involving initial choice, the inter-cultural experience and return to the original culture. Essential to his analyses is the growth in skills and knowledge, occurring through challenges encountered in the other culture. This growth includes inner development of thinking and feelings about self, as well as the development of additional skills and abilities. Central to the journey and sojourn, according to Hart, are those who mentor and provide help and insights, although the individual must take the steps him/herself to achieve and learn, and must readjust to the original culture and thinking about the culture after the experiences. Hart's analyses and arguments also run parallel to, or link to, the literature on adolescent and adult development (eg see Mussen et al. 1965, Erikson 1968; Erikson & Erikson 1997), and identity and culture (eg see Jandt 2003), particularly youth culture and its emphasis upon novelty and change, although he does not draw upon these.

Hart's concepts link closely to the desires of students wishing to undertake a socio-cultural experience, or the desire to achieve a goal not available to them in Japan. It could relate to a deepening awareness of their own personal needs and/or abilities, or could be a desire to

undertake an experience outside the 'norm'. It could be an exploration of themselves, challenging or finding themselves. The concept of '*charenji*' coming from the English 'to challenge', is common in Japan. This is often the reason that some Japanese people study English in the evenings or learn some new skill - it is the individual challenging themselves to succeed. There is certainly anecdotal and other evidence that this is an important motivator. When the researcher asked a student in Japan why he wanted to go to Australia as an exchange student, he responded: '*I want to charenji (challenge)*' (Sakamoto 2004). In this instance the student is challenging not just himself, but also an unknown educational environment where acceptable, perhaps expected behavioural patterns are potentially different from those in Japan, and thus at odds with the accepted norms of the home society.

Personal reasons

Choice to become an international university student may also include a range of personal reasons. Although these do not appear to be well documented, anecdotal evidence obtained from interview with international students by the researcher has revealed that personal reasons, particularly emotional relationships, familial and friendship connections, seem to be involved in some students' choices (also see Baas 2006). In many cases the personal reasons relate to aspects of culture and personal response to this. It is generally accepted that Japanese culture remains male-dominated with the family values and wishes continuing to exert strong control. Anecdotal evidence derived from interviews with young Japanese women indicates that some use international study as a means of delaying marriage to a partner in an arranged marriage. In other cases it is a matter of 'value' being added to young women to make them more 'desirable' as marriage partners. (see Beauchamp 1991, p239). Atsumi, cited in Anderssen and Kumagai (1996, p9), also explains:

'...a majority of young Japanese women will encounter a negative career prospect and heavy social pressure to marry at marriageable age which is between 23 and 27 in Japan, some of these young women may come to Australia after finishing high school or tertiary education or after working for a few years in Japan, wishing to learn English and/or taste life abroad before they become confined to the life of a married woman'.

Research reported by Piller and Takahashi (2006), albeit using a limited sample and ethnographic approaches, has also indicated that desire to emulate and learn about western culture, along with a desire to experience an emotional relationship, can be strong source of motivation to learn English and study internationally for at least some younger Japanese women. Their research indicated that these romantic desires were fostered by Japanese popular culture

press coverage of cultural issues. However, in the researcher's experience, there are also at least some Japanese women who use study in Australia as a means of delaying marriage and commitment (Mamiko 1996).

There are a variety of other personal reasons linked to educational issues as to why students choose to study in Australia. Students may wish to undertake an international educational experience, because, if educated outside Japan when accompanying parents employed by multinationals or in consular services, they may not be in a position to undertake tertiary studies in Japan due to not meeting tertiary entry requirements. Some Japanese students' desire for study overseas springs from dissatisfaction with their own educational system. Brereton (2003) uses the example of Sawa, who dropped out of school in Japan at 15 years of age, and 'under her own steam' flew to Britain – with few language skills, returning to Japan nine years later with an architectural degree. For another group, the decision to study overseas may be to gain an academic qualification not available in Japan, for others it is a second chance on the educational ladder, since they have failed academically or socially 'at home'. For yet another group, particularly those who may have visited Australia for holiday or relaxation purposes, there may be the idea that university life in Australia will somehow be easier than in Japan.

Andressen and Kumagai (1996, p8) comment that Japanese students who study overseas, unlike their Asian classmates, are less interested in the potential employment outcomes of their stay, and more interested in '*a short term change in lifestyle, specialised research areas or a general goal of self fulfillment. In addition, Japanese appear to be more concerned with escaping the restrictions found in their home country*'. An important motive also is curiosity about western cultures. There is also evidence to suggest that some students determine to study in Australia based upon an expectation of undertaking what may be termed a 'full' Australian experience through making friends with Australian students, and perhaps visiting Australian homes (Smart, Davis, Volet & Milne 1999, pp1-2). Karita's (1999) research in Japan indicated that students, visiting Australia for short English language courses, chose one where afternoon cultural or volunteer activities were part of the program. The English language component of the course was important, but Karita's students found that after university graduation employment was secured more easily, since discussion of the overseas experience and host culture '*impressed the interviewer*' (Karita 1999, p104). The purpose of the overseas study therefore is not necessarily academic in nature, but may be personal and also related to meeting the needs of a desired employer.

While these various personal reasons appear important, they also appear to be very variable and unique to the individual. Whatever the reason or reasons that international students come to Australia, such students play an important, and increasing, role in Australia's economy, and that of individual universities through the fees that they pay.

International students in Australia and other English speaking countries: Australia's position and the financial impact of international students

Full fee paying students have been recruited in earnest, since the mid 1980s (Cobbin et al. 1999). By 1999, for example, 12% of all students enrolled in higher education in Australia were international students, one of the highest percentages of any country in the world at that time, and well ahead of the then 3% figure in the United States of America (Smart, Volet & Ang 2000, p1).

The financial expenditure of fee paying international students in Australia is significant. In 2000, the last year for which financial data is available, the 153,372 international students studying on shore had a combined expenditure of an estimated \$3,696 million. Of this, \$1,840 million or 49.8% went to the enrolling institutions in fees, with the remaining \$1,856 million (50.2%) being spent within the local community on goods and services such as accommodation, food and transportation (Australian Education International 2001, p12). Although unavailable, because of changes in the collection of data, it is not unreasonable to expect an increase in expenditure to have occurred in subsequent years along similar lines to that of the increase in student numbers. This makes the industry an extremely important service export for Australia, and Australia an important player in the provision of international education and training. However recent articles, even in the popular press in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Jopson & Burke 2005, p35) and *The Sun Herald* (Lawson 2004, p37), have demonstrated the dangers of an institution's reliance upon the financial benefits of accepting large numbers of international students, and the associated risk of academic standards being compromised (see also Elson-Green 2006a & b).

Australia's competitors

Like Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom have large numbers of fee paying international students, and these countries, along with New Zealand, are seen as Australia's major competitors in the field of higher education. With 57,661 international students in 1998-1999, Australia was third in the English speaking world, behind the USA with 481,280 students and the UK with 219,285. This position was maintained in 2000 with 188,277 international students in Australia, 227,271 in the UK and 514,723 in the USA. (Australian Education International 2000, p16). When comparing Australia's share in the onshore sector with competitor countries in 2000, the

USA attracted 59.9% of the cohort, the UK 26.4%, and Australia came in third with 8.5% of the students, followed by Canada with 4.1% and New Zealand with 1.1%. (Australian Education International 2000, p17). Australia remained a long way behind the two main competitor countries in terms of the number of international students studying on shore. However, in terms of actual growth rate in 2000, Australia at 19.4% was a long way ahead of the United States at 4.8% and the United Kingdom at 2.3% (Australian Education International 2000, p16). Not all of the almost 130,000 international students in the Australian higher education sector in 2000 were resident in Australia. Of the 129,781 students, that figure being a 10.9% increase over the preceding year, there were 86,269 studying onshore, up 18.6% from 2000, and 42,802 studying off shore, an increase of 22.6% over the preceding year (Australian Education International 2003).

The higher education sector

In 2001, Australia had 86,269 international students studying on shore in the higher education sector. This placed Australia in third position in the English speaking world that year, with 8.6% of the higher education market share amongst major competitors. This figure however was still considerably behind the United States with 582,996 higher education students (61.5% share) 2001 – 2002, and the United Kingdom with 232,761, (24.6%) share in the sector over the same period (Australian Education International 2003, pp7-8).

Australian Education International (AEI) statistics for 2001-2008 highlight the fact that the majority of Australia's international students continue to be drawn from neighbouring Asian countries. Australia is the destination of choice for students from both Singapore and Malaysia, while for students from Hong Kong, the UK is the preferred study destination. In the case of students from other Asian countries, in Australia's top ten source countries, the USA is the preferred destination (Australian Education International 2000, p17). Table (i) presents the top ten source countries for Australia in May 2006 and the number of international fee paying students enrolling from those countries across all sectors.

It is both important and interesting to note that, with the exception of the USA, the top ten source countries are still Australia's Asian neighbours. This is despite the fact that Australian educators and educational administrators are, in all sectors, trying to diversify their international student cohort. However, due to changes in 2003 to the way in which the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) data are collected, the increase in 2001, up from 188,277 in 2000 (Australian Education International 2003), cannot really be compared for example, with the increase in 2000 from the 1999 figure of 162,865 (Australian Education

International 2001). Despite this, Australian Education International comments that it is likely that growth at a minimum level of 15% occurred over 2000 to 2001 (Australian Education International 2003).

Table (i): The top ten student nationalities in Australia as at May 2006

Country	Number of students studying in Australia
China	67,966
India	26,178
Republic of (South) Korea	22,399
Malaysia	16,541
Hong Kong	16,134
Japan	13,461
Thailand	12,307
Indonesia	11,798
United States of America	8,023
Singapore	7,989
Total	279,839

According to the latest figures available, those at August 2008 supplied by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) through Australian International Education, there were 474,389 international students enrolled in courses at Australian educational institutions. Some 179,136 of those students were in higher education, that is university education as opposed to school or college level (Australian Education International, Monthly Summary of International Student Enrolment Data, August 2008).

Growth predictions

Research carried out by the former International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges, now known as IDP Education Australia (IDP), suggests that the global demand for international higher education will grow from over 2 million in 2003 to 7.5 million in 2025, with 3.4 million international students expected to study in one of the five major English speaking destinations: Australia, UK, USA, Canada and New Zealand. (Australian Education International 2003, p3). IDP comments further that the global demand for Australian international higher education will probably involve an annual 9% growth rate, reaching 658,104 international students studying on shore by 2025. This figure represents 19.3% of the major English language speaking destination countries. IDP indicated that by 2025 the Asia region will represent 93% of demand (IDP Education Australia 2003, p3). Reasons for this may lie in the tendency of Asian countries with a history of modern industrial development to have focused primarily upon primary and secondary education, rather than tertiary education.

There is evidence that, over the last ten to fifteen years, the founding of tertiary level institutions in Asia, particularly those with a technological focus, has increased. Examples of this move include Shinawatra University in Thailand founded by the former Prime Minister of the same name, Selamat Datang Ke Kolej Universiti Kejuruteraan Utara Malaysia, in Malaysia also known as KUKUM its English acronym, and Mahanakorn University in Thailand. Previously their students would typically have studied overseas. These developments regarding Asian universities, and China's university growth aspirations, suggest that the growth 'predictions' referred to above may be somewhat unreliable and need to be handled accordingly. They should be viewed in the light of recent data suggesting that international student numbers from Australia's traditional source countries, typically Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore are in fact dropping, due not only to the increase in tertiary institutions in Asia, but in part to the rise in the value of the Australian dollar (Maslen 2005, p1). This has made the need for universities (and government authorities) to understand the needs and expectations of international students, to try to ensure satisfactory learning experiences for them, all the more important to maintain markets and market share. Although Japan does not supply the largest number of students, the Japanese market is important to Australia, potentially capable of expansion, and data concerning the specifically Japanese international cohort in Australia is explored next. In international terms, Japanese students provide the second largest group of international student enrolments in the OECD countries after Korea (Australian Education International, Market Data Snapshots, January 2008).

Japanese students in Australia

In 2001 when this study commenced, across all sectors there were 12,869 Japanese fee paying international students in Australia. Only China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea provided more students in terms of the actual numbers of students enrolled that year (Australian Education International 2003).

When considering Australia's main competitor countries however, it is interesting to note that the USA in 2001-2003, enrolled 46,810 students from Japan, with the UK enrolling 6,025 over the same period. In 1999 – 2000 Canada had 1,414 Japanese students while in 2001, 3,390 studied in New Zealand (Australian Education International 2003, p8). There are arguably two main interlinked reasons for the USA receiving the largest share of Japanese students. The Japanese education system was put in place by the Americans after World War 2, and thus having been modeled on the American system, Japan like America has a four year undergraduate program. For the researcher, personal experience derived from researching, working with, and recruiting students in Japan has shown that a three year undergraduate program can be seen by the Japanese as being 'inferior' to one of four years, as is characteristic of undergraduate degrees in the USA.

The figures cited relating to Japanese students in Australia need to be viewed in light of Japan experiencing its own financial difficulties from the early nineties, and from which the country has yet to completely recover (Callick 2005, p10). Given the fact that unresolved economic problems linger still from the 'bubble economy', it remains to be seen what impact this may have on Japanese student numbers in the foreseeable future. Economic pressures in 1997 saw the number of students in Australia drop 12.4% from the 1996 cohort of 13,422, to 11,736. The 1998 enrolment of 10,762 demonstrated a further drop of 8.6%. When taking into account the total number of Japanese students studying overseas however, particularly those in Australia at that point in time, the importance to those students of the Australian international educational experience is clearly demonstrated. Although the 1999 cohort represented yet a further decline of 8.7%, due to the economic hardship being experienced in Japan at that time, Australia was the third ranking destination country for Japanese students behind the USA and the UK (Australian Education International 2000, p16). This decline appears to have been a temporary aberration since in 2000 the figure had risen to 10,220, an increase of 25.9% over the preceding year when 9,825 Japanese students chose to study in Australia. Of the 9,825 students, 3,981 were male and 6,239 female. The figure for 2001 continued to reflect a further turn around from the decline (Australian Education International 2001, p103).

Table (ii): Educational sectors where Japanese student are represented

Higher Education	Vocational Education and Training	School Sector	ELICOS Sector	Other
2,071	2,410	1,060	2,662	295

Source: Australian Education International (2006)

Until more recently, statistical data regarding student numbers has often been imprecise. This is due to the ELICOS figure cited only including those students studying on a Student Visa. When added to the not insignificant numbers studying English on a Working Holiday or Tourist Visa, statistics that have not always been maintained in detail by DIMA, the actual figure within the sector was much higher.

In 2000 for example an estimated 10,350 Japanese students studied on such visas, taking the total Japanese enrollment that year to 20,570. (Australian Education International 2000, p22). Although accurate statistics regarding students studying English language on a Tourist or Working Holiday visa are not available, these figures are important when considering future trends. Potentially such students could extend their stay in Australia, change visa status if necessary, and enroll in a university program. There are also young Japanese people undertaking their high school studies in Australia. In January 2006 for example, there were 1,060 Japanese students enrolled in the school sector (Australian Education International 2006, p10). It is therefore possible, and indeed probable, that being unprepared for entrance exams to gain a place at a Japanese university, these students remain in Australia subsequently enrolling into university here. These students could potentially be better prepared for tertiary studies, since by having studied in an Australian high school, they can be expected to have a clearer understanding of the Australian educational system including the expectations placed upon students in Australia (eg see Purdie & Hattie 1996). No reliable statistical data have been sourced for Japanese students making such a transition.

The financial factor

The Japanese students who chose to study in Australia are important not just for their presence on campus in an era of internationalization, but also for the income that they generate. When viewed in light of the financial expenditure of each national group, the 10,220 Japanese students who chose to study in Australia in 2000 spent \$249 million, just behind students from Malaysia, China, Hong Kong, and Indonesia (Australian Education International 2000, p 80). Subsequent increases in Japanese student numbers until 2006 can be judged to have resulted in proportionally higher Japanese expenditure, although exact figures are not available.

The Japanese market – who studies here?

The Japanese market is not one that for Australia is traditionally higher education based. Andressen and Kumagai (1996) cite DEST figures indicating that in 1989 there were just 222 Japanese students studying at the tertiary level in Australia. Ninety one were at higher degree level, and one hundred and nineteen at the undergraduate level. A further twelve were non award, i.e. not undertaking a program that would lead to an academic qualification upon completion.

Table (iii): Numbers of international students in Australia 1994 –2006

Year	Total number of international students enrolled across all sectors	Total number of Japanese students enrolled across all sectors	Japanese students enrolled in higher education
1994	93,722	N/A	N/A
1995	111,280	11,796	290
1996	135,226	13,422	385
1997	151,150	11,763	476
1998	147,136	10,739	1,796
1999	157,384	9,825	1543
2000	188,277	10,220	1,762
2001	190,606	12,856	1,991
2002	273,855	17,329	2,681
2003	303,324	19,069	2959
2004	322,230	19,743	3287
2005	344,815	19,031	N/A
2006	144,168*	13,461*	2,991*

* as at May 2006: Sources: Australian Education International (1998 – 2006)

More than a decade later the situation had changed substantially. Out of the 12,869 Japanese students in Australia in 2001, 1,991, an increase of 13% over the preceding year, were studying in the higher education sector, while an additional 360 were enrolled in higher education programs being delivered off shore. A further 3,086 were in vocational education, 1,142 in school education and the remaining 6,276 in ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas students). By 2006 the 13,461 Japanese students studying in Australia were undertaking a wide range of programs. Table (iii) provides an indication of changes in numbers over the period 1994-2006. In Table (iii) column one presents the year in question; column two presents the number of International students enrolled in Australia; column three presents the total number of Japanese studying across all sectors; and column four presents the number of Japanese students enrolled in higher education. It is important to note that figures in Table (iii) do not differentiate between students on a Student, Working Holiday or Tourist Visa. To create a more accurate picture, Table (iv) indicates the number of Japanese students studying in Australia between 1995 and 2004 on a Student Visa.

Table (iv): Japanese students studying in Australia on a Student Visa 1995 - 2004

Year	Number of students
1995	8,604
1996	13,422
1997	11,763
1998	10,763
1999	9,825
2000	10,220
2001	12,869
2002	14,902
2003	17,704

(Sources: AEI 1996 – 2008)

Figures indicate gradual increases over time when previously considered economic dips are taken into account. Table (iv) reveals the significant increase in Japanese students coming to

Australia to study across all sectors between 1995 and 2003, despite issues relating to the Japanese economy during this period, culminating in 17,704 students in Australia in 2003. Since 2003 the number of Japanese students studying in Australia has declined, particularly in the period 2006-2008. Australian Education International (2006-8) figures for this period reveal that for 2006 to 2007 there was a decline of 9.7% from 17,340 to 15,656, while from 2007 to 2008 there was a further decline of 14.6% to 12,040, far larger than other countries, but with Japan still remaining the eleventh largest source country in higher education with 3,094 enrolments in October 2007. From 2007 to January 2008 there was a further decline in the number of Japanese students studying in higher education in Australia to 2,668.

The continuing pattern of decline may be the result of a number of factors, including the increasing strength of the Australian dollar over this period, although, with this same factor operating, there was an overall increase in international student enrolments with commencements growing by 21.4% in 2008. It is also possible that the learning needs of Japanese students are not being met, particularly at university level, and word of mouth concerning lessened satisfaction is resulting in the decline. While this must remain speculative in the absence of definite proof of causes, and the lack of interest in Australian Educational International to research the causes thoroughly, given the potential of the Japanese student market as the second largest after Korea in OECD countries (Australian Education International Market Data Snapshot, January 2008), Australia is not proving to be particularly effective in attracting Japanese students. Meeting the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students more effectively could potentially change this.

Research into the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students

Given the marketisation of higher education in Australia, and the very considerable financial contribution made to the Australian economy by international Japanese university students, it would be expected that there would have been reasonably substantial research conducted into the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students, in order to preserve this market and ensure its viability in the longer term. Despite extensive and persistent searches, using Google, Google Scholar, Educationline, EdResearchOnline and Informit amongst other data bases, it has not been possible to locate any printed or e-materials that look specifically at this cohort with this purpose. Andressen and Kumagai (1996) did consider why the Japanese students participating in their research had come to Australia. What they discussed however is more related to social change, the attempted internationalization of education in Japan, and the limited demographic characteristics of Japanese students in Australia. This is important, but it doesn't cover the main

issues to be investigated by this study, namely their expectations regarding university studies in this country.

Japanese students in residential courses in England have been researched (Pritchard 1995), and identity within language learning has been considered (Norton 2000). Problems for students studying English in Japan have been explored (McMahil 1997; Lessard-Cloustan 1998), with other researchers considering the potential socio-cultural issues faced by Japanese students residing overseas with their families, often due to a parental business posting and known as *kikokushijo*, 'returnee' students (White 1988; Kanno 1996; Taura 1998).

Whereas there have been occasional articles about Japanese students in Australia, (see Marriott 1994), these have primarily been articles exploring the social and educational needs of Japanese exchange students, primarily at the high school level. No research appears to have been carried out on Japanese university students in this country specifically regarding how they see themselves as students and exploring their learning needs and expectations. This apparent lack of interest is despite, in 2000, the expenditure of the 10,220 Japanese students, who chose to study in Australia, generating \$249 million (Australian Education International 2001, p13). It is also despite the occasional case study reported that indicates a great need for such research.

Limited case study material, of Japanese students' experiences in an English speaking culture, highlights the differences between the values and expectations that Japanese students almost invariably bring with them, because of cultural conditioning over many years growing up in Japanese culture, and the inevitable intercultural conflicts and problems. When Yuriko Nagata, arrived at an American university for an interview since her TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score did not meet their requirements, she functioned as she would have done in her own, Japanese culture: *'Be polite, say little, accept authority'* (Nagata 1999, p16). In the American cultural context this was interpreted as an inability to communicate in English and she was placed in a language class. Some weeks later, there was recognition that responding in a Japanese framework may have been successful for her in her own (Japanese) environment, but it worked against her in the American system (Nagata 1999, p16). The interviewer, through her 'politeness' and deference, had been unable, to assess her true language level, since by deferring to authority, she had not allowed him to. For Japanese students in Australia, like in the USA, such culturally derived 'politeness' is not going to assist a student's studies, but typically portrays the individual as someone who does not understand, or who favours a non-participatory role in an educational setting.

This absence of a serious research literature on the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students is somewhat surprising, given the concern, long expressed, about understanding and meeting the needs of students of different cultures to ensure effective learning experiences (Ballard 1987; Burke 1988). However this dearth of literature is not just confined to Australia, surprisingly extensive searches have not located research into the needs and expectations of Japanese university students in either the UK or USA, which countries have considerable numbers of Japanese students and are international competitors, nor any other English speaking countries such as Canada and New Zealand. The general tendency in the related literature has been to focus upon the needs of international students as a group (eg see Ballard & Clanchy 1991; Cox 2004; Owens 2005). Hence there is a rich and valuable literature on studying and teaching in a multicultural learning environment in Australia (see Bradley & Bradley 1984; Paige 1993; Finney & Orr 1995; Morey & Kiland 1997; Li & Kaye 1998).

At the tertiary level, the Japanese market is not generally considered an easy one to penetrate for a number of reasons, not least of which relates to the students' concept of what an educational institution will provide. Yet understanding Japanese students' expectations is necessary to attract more Japanese students to Australian tertiary institutions, and to ensure the satisfactory completion of courses undertaken. Only recently has Fallon (2008) mounted the argument that it is necessary to understand the differences between the quite distinct Asian cultures in effectively meeting their needs on a one-to-one basis. In order to maintain Japanese patronage it is critical that educators involved with such students recognize the qualities and issues that differentiate this cohort from other Asian cultures. For tertiary international education to be successful, it is necessary to focus on both the educational and socio-cultural needs of Japanese and other cultural groups across all sectors.

Specific learning needs of Asian and Japanese international students

The particular challenges posed to many Asian international students studying at Australian universities, on account of their culturally learned expectations, have been long recognized (see Ballard 1987; Ballard & Clanchy 1997; Cobbin et al 1999; Phillips 1993; Owens 2005). Those engaged in English language training and academic support services in Australian universities have been acutely aware of the differences between Australian university culture and academic requirements, and the cultural understandings about learning that Asian international students bring with them. Consequently there is material specifically designed to provide international students with survival strategies for studying overseas (see Ballard & Clanchy 1997; Cooper 2003). Furthermore, in Australia, organisations such as IDP have commissioned a range of

studies, relating to international students on campus, from covering comparative costs of study in Australia and competitor countries, to studies focusing on the enhancement of social interaction on the tertiary campus, (see IDP Education Australia 1994; IDP Education Australia 1998). However, it is important to note that this material appears to be neither available in Japan, nor in Japanese.

All of this literature is based upon the perception that students from different cultures have learned different skills and attitudes concerning what are appropriate forms of learning and the demonstration of this in specific cultural contexts. Whilst attempts have been made to destroy false stereotypes held by Australians about Asian learning and the processes involved (eg Chalmers & Volet 1997; for a summary, see Owens 2005), and these may have succeeded in fostering greater cultural sensitivity and understanding, the real problem remains that the skills previously learned in another country and cultural context sometimes, if not frequently, are not effective in the different Australian academic context. That is to say the cultural understandings of learning of Asian students are appropriate in their own cultures, however they are often ineffective in the Australian setting.

Australian universities use different assessment criteria and standards focused upon independent critical thinking, reasoning and debate, critical evaluation, and often competitive individual activities, as well as more cooperative group work assignment processes (Alexander 2008; Burch 2008; Morley-Warner 2000; Owens 2005). Ballard and Clanchy (1997) summarized the chief expectations of Australian academics as involving independence, self-reliance and critical thinking. Similar problems and challenges, regarding inadequacy of these skills at Australian standards for Asian international students, seem to apply across a wide range of specialty areas, ranging from the humanities (Phillips 1993; Owens 2005) to accountancy (Burch 2008). Sociological/anthropological approaches provide additional insights into the nature of the culture-based learning differences identified and problems encountered (see below).

Potentially, the Japanese students coming to Australia will lack any pre-tertiary level education considering analytical thought, since high school was primarily about gaining entry to university, not being equipped with the skills to be academically successful in the complex Australian university context. There is general agreement that secondary education in Japan involves a great deal of repetition with little attention to critical and analytical skill development (Metreaux 2001; McVeigh 2002), although it must be noted that this has come almost entirely from non-Japanese researchers working in Japan. However there has been limited research in the specific ways that Japanese learning traditions differ from contemporary Australian university ones.

Specifically with regard to Japanese cultural traditions and different ideals/models in writing, Kubota (1992) has analyzed Japanese and English expository and persuasive modes and found distinctive patterns, as well as some similarities, in Japanese and English L1 (first language) essays. Although difficulties associated with a small number of subjects, non-randomly selected and the problems of controlling for levels of ability and individual differences in ability in relation to subject matter and subject specialization seriously hamper the generalizability of findings, it does seem that distinctive cultural models have been identified by this researcher although she was eager to emphasize similarities. Other research by Purdie and Hattie (1996) found differences between the strategies used in self-regulated learning between Japanese high school students in Japan and Australian high school students, as well as Japanese high school students studying in Australia, with those Japanese students studying in Australia revealing a pattern falling between the Japanese students in Japan and the Australians. Both groups of Japanese students involved in the study placed greater emphasis upon repetition and memorization than did their Australian counterparts, in line with general findings regarding Asian students (eg see Ballard & Clanchy 1991; Owens 2005; Burch 2008).

It could be argued that the transition to an Australian university for international students is similar for Australian students moving from high school to university. Both groups, local and international students, appear to assume that it will be 'more of the same'. There is ample evidence that the university learning culture is often a challenge even for English speaking Australians, with a number of resources developed specifically to assist adaptation to the demands of university learning (eg Cooper 2003; Morley-Warner 2000). Cooper (2003, p5) reminds Australian students moving from high school to university that: *'It is a mistake to think that there is a straightforward progression from school to university or that learning at a university is much the same as learning at school except that it is more intellectually demanding'*. Whereas there are clearly parallels between the two groups of students, Australian high school graduates have 'only' to contend with the progression; Asian international students, on the other hand, have the progression and linguistic, cultural and different teaching difficulties to deal with.

International students and the adequacy and accessing of support services

Under the ESOS Act of 2000 universities are required to provide appropriate support services to international students. There is little doubt that all universities attempt to meet the letter of the law requirements by providing support for student learning, whether this occur via units known as Study Skills Centres, or by various other titles. The provision of adequate services

commensurate with the needs of international students from non-Anglo cultures, and the actual accessing and effective use of these by international students are however other issues, important in the context of this study. Universities have been under financial strain in Australia for a very considerable period, and this has been long recognized, with international student fees being viewed by universities as a means of obtaining income to support many other functions, other than services for support of international students. Individual universities make service provision decisions based on their own income and competing claims and no reliable data have been sourced that looks at appropriate proportions of international fees being spent directly on the students who supply this income stream. Barke et al (2002a, p25) have highlighted the problem by stating: *'Services for international students must meet the needs of international students – not those of the institution'*. Financial stringencies have resulted in re-organisation and curtailment of services over the past decade in many universities. The cuts to compulsory student unionism three years ago by the Howard Federal Government are now widely recognized as having exacerbated a difficult financial situation. They contributed to the curtailment of existing, other services by the universities which have budgeted more tightly and curtailed other services to continue to provide the no longer funded services (Browne 2008, p10; Davis 2008, p1).

Although direct empirical evidence of research into the adequacy of university support service for international students is lacking, indirect evidence from cross-cultural communication literature indicates the nature of the problems. There are serious questions over the adequacy of the former and existing services provided for international students, and the willingness of international students to access them on account of cultural sensitivities. Ensuring that international students who need the support access the existing services in a timely way is recognized as a major problem (Owens 2005), particularly on account of potential 'loss of face' with Asian students. However there is also the very real problem of student not recognizing their needs and what might be available, even though the services might be advertised, as with Australian born students. Often students are not aware of the skills that they lack, especially if they assume (incorrectly) that in the new culture the learning will be the same as in the former one. The case studies of numbers of international students studying at university in Australia illustrate these problems graphically, especially the case of Tsuyoshi, a Japanese postgraduate student, who failed as a result of too late recognition and attempts to remedy the problems (*Inside Australia: Downunder Grads*, Part 3, SBS 2008). There are also unresolved questions both about the levels of knowledge of academic support staff about the learning needs of students from different cultures (Phillips 1993; Fallon 2008), and lack of training relating to cultural knowledge and sensitivities (Owens 2005).

Japanese students' cultural expectations of learning at university in Australia are almost certainly formed by expectations of the path to university in Japan. The expectations differ significantly between Japan and Australia concerning how learning is engaged in, in the seriousness of the activities at university, as well as the route to university, and these Japanese expectations will be now explored. Additional insights into why Japanese students may not access existing Australian support services at optimal levels are provided by these following sections.

Students' expectations of university in Japan

Attending university in Japan is as much related to social mobility as it is to education, but with 50% of the school population going on to further study at university or colleges (Barke et al 2002a, 2002b), there would appear to be an expectation that university will be attended by many. Students undertaking tertiary study in Japan at the undergraduate level are not doing so in order to exit four years later into that disciplined workforce, fully trained in their specific area, and ready to contribute to their employers needs. The subsequent employer will mould its employees to meet its own needs (Mathews 2004), with there being a regular 'job hunting season', although this appears to be undertaken with increasing cynicism with the effective curtailment of employment for life (Mathews 2004; also see below regarding changing values and youth culture), and for which students will even return from overseas. Traditionally education at the right Japanese institution, high school or university can lead to employment in Japan's most prestigious organisations, among them the Japanese government's elite ministries such as the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Andressen & Kumagai 1996). These are the reasons that education in Japan today remains the most important means of social mobility, with the whole country aspiring to move up (Andressen & Kumagai 1996, p25).

In social advancement terms, the more 'famous' the educational institution is the better, since such an institution is more difficult to enter and, by having passed the entrance examination and thus secured a place, the student is demonstrating that they have the 'right stuff' (Christopher 1984, p84). But if a student wishes to be ultimately employed in the Ministry of Commerce, or into a specific corporation, acceptance into the university known to recruit staff from that institution is critical. Institutions are ranked, with, at each level of education, the goal being to enter the most prestigious school that subsequently feeds into the next most prestigious school, from when the child enters kindergarten right up to the university entrance examination at the most prestigious institution (James & Benjamin 1988, p38). Despite changes in values in Japan regarding employment (see below), the name of the university attended means 'everything' (Hirano 2005).

The role of ‘cram schools’ in university entry

Entry to Japanese universities is typically through a competitive university entrance exam. Although the focus of the educational system is to enter a good university, large numbers of high school graduates do not, and in fact cannot, enter university directly from high school, with only about 60% succeeding in gaining direct entry from high school. For many, entry is through a ‘tertiary level’ cram school, not unlike the institution they may well have studied at in order to enter their desired high school. Such institutions, which are typically private, although Japanese universities are now establishing their own to ensure student numbers and income (Ashizawa 2005), are known as *yobiko* and their students as *ronin*. Typically 40% of Japanese university entrants each year will be graduates of a *yobiko*. The word *ronin* comes from the Tokugawa period (1630 – 1868) and was the name given to samurai who had yet to find a lord or master to be permanently attached to (James & Benjamin 1988, p37). These students are also seeking an attachment to a specific university.

The real challenge is the competitiveness at the high school level, where graduating students are competing in the university entrance examination for their desired institution with *ronin* who have typically spent two to three years in a *yobiko*, preparing exclusively for the examination for their preferred university. The new high school graduates therefore often must themselves enter a *yobiko* for two or three years in order to improve their scores and enter university, whilst the next high school cohort moves up the ladder behind them into the *yobiko*.

Hendry (2003, p95) has noted that once a place has been secured in a Japanese tertiary institution, the career path is in fact unrelated to, or independent of the outcome of the degree undertaken, and that this period of the individual’s life is in fact the transition to adulthood from childhood. However, if a student is unsuccessful in the competitive university entrance exams, a second chance is available to those who can afford it as a fee paying international student overseas.

Learning within the Japanese university at undergraduate and postgraduate levels

The literature researching learning at a Japanese university indicates a different set of goals and experiences to those pertaining at Australian universities. Higher education in Japan has traditionally been viewed as four years of relaxation after the somewhat arduous process of gaining entry. This is despite the fact that, in interviews with the author, some Japanese who have studied at university claim to have studied diligently because of fear of failure and uncertainty about what was expected. However Da Silva and McInerney (2005, p1) summarize the issues thus: ‘...there is a consensus that, with the exception of a few elite public and private

universities, Japanese universities are 'playgrounds' and Japanese university students lack the motivation to study, compared to their counterparts in other countries. University is seen as a kind of 'moratorium' before entering the workforce...'. Da Silva and McInerney (2005), albeit on the basis of limited empirical research using 500 female students at one university, have challenged the notion that the students lack intrinsic motivation, and blame the universities, administration and the cultural context.

Rohlen and LeTendre (1998) are among the very few who have seen the Japanese university experience positively on the basis of socialization and longer term personal development. In effect this amounts to recognizing the importance of a kind of personal 'time out' from the strong pressures for social conformity in Japanese society. Hood (2001, p142) indicates that during this time, students can develop their own individuality, with his personal discussions revealing that some students have chosen universities and courses known to have a high percentage of *kyuko* (cancelled classes). Hood (2001) also cites Shimizu et al (1995), who advanced data showing that Japanese students tend to not fail at university in Japan, with typically 82% graduating after four years, and a further 10% sometime later. Thus the socializing aspect of the tertiary sector, that seems to typify the university sector in Japan, clearly does not get in the way of academic success, although the statistics cited have, according to Hood, not been seen as the result of education of a high quality, but rather the lax attitude to 'poor' students taken by their institution (Hood 2001, p141).

McVeigh (2002), based on his experiences as a university academic in Japan, comments that many students give very little attention to real classroom practices intended for learning. However, if they want to graduate they will worry about collecting the required number of credits required to do so and will participate in the highly ritualised practice of 'attendance'. Just being in the classroom (ie not necessarily taking notes or learning anything) takes the place of real learning (McVeigh 2002, p30). McVeigh (2002, p124) refers to a foreign university academic in Japan who was told to improve his teaching since the students 'should have fun and shouldn't have to study too much', leading perhaps to the recommended grading policy in the institution which saw 30% of students attain 'A', 50% 'B' and 20% 'C'.

Personal experience of the researcher indicates that academic study itself is not seen in Japan as something integral to the university experience. This is clearly demonstrated when the role of assignments in a Japanese university are explored. McVeigh (2002) for example comments that, in many instances, Japanese tertiary level students do not believe that assignments are meant to

be completed. He cites his own students who, when given such tasks, commented that it was only high school students who undertook homework. One student commented:

'We should not be assigned homework since we are daigaku (university) students. A daigaku is not a place which forces students to study. If they want to study they can do work outside of class themselves, but professors have no right to tell them what to do'

(McVeigh 2002, p208).

Reasons for McVeigh's students not completing their assignments ranged from: no time due to part time work/club activities/ having a girlfriend or boyfriend/ spending too much time commuting to and from *daigaku*, or because they were not used to studying. There are no specific data available on how widely prevalent such attitudes are within the Japanese educational system, but the accounts generally agree on lack of academic rigour, with much attention to repetition in learning (Hood 2001; McVeigh 2002; Metraux 2001). Notwithstanding this generalization, Seltman (1991) records teaching Japanese students with good motivation and study habits.

There are also substantial differences between the concept of postgraduate study at Australian and Japanese universities. In Australia postgraduate study involves depth of study in the selected area and often original research. Postgraduate level education in Japan reflects the historical belief that the role of the graduate school is to train university professors (Ushioji 1997, p238). This has led to a sharp differentiation between graduate studies in engineering and the sciences where Ushioji comments, roughly 80% are recruited into the research laboratories in private enterprise, and graduates in the humanities field where no established market exist (Ushioji 1997, p238).

The impact of culture: Issues related to homogeneity of Japanese culture

The culture that surrounds the individual is generally recognized as being very important in shaping that individual, particularly values and the way that he/she tends to think and respond in social situations. This is equally true from developmental psychology perspectives (eg see Mussen et al 1965), or from more sociologically oriented ones (eg Hofstede 1984, 1994). Hofstede (1994, p11) refers to the 'all pervading impact of culture' and the way in which it impacts upon what he has called 'the software of the mind', that is the way we think and act. The factors that influence culture according to Hofstede include region, religion, gender, generation and class. However a definite distinction needs to be drawn between individual differences and the overall impact of culture that produces identifiable cultural differences.

While individual differences are occasioned by growing up on a farm as opposed to in the city, and having particular sets of beliefs about religion, having a particular gender at birth or through identification (see Mussen et al 1965), experiencing different cultural history events and forms of technology by being born into different generations, and class-based experiences, there are elements of culture that produce definitely distinct, identifiable cultural differences and markers (see Mussen et al 1965). Understanding cultural differences has tremendous potential for increasing the effectiveness of international student learning and satisfaction with social experiences during the international sojourn (Fallon 2008; Owens 2005).

Japan has long been recognized as having a distinct language and culture and being a relatively homogeneous society (Huntington 1996). The homogeneous nature of Japanese society has been disputed by some, for example Kubota (2002) who has challenged unitary views of Japanese society that some westerners hold. While it is indisputable that there are native groups like the Ainu and Okinawans, there are substantial minority groups such as Koreans and Chinese who have become nationalized, and there are individual differences that have their origin in the factors listed by Hofstede (1994), there are a number of reasons for considering Japan as a relatively homogeneous society.

Japan has consistently and consciously promoted itself as a homogeneous culture (eg see Iwabuchi 2002, especially pp5-7). Its ability to absorb and transform foreign influences into particularly Japanese forms, and to export its culture to other Asian countries, stem from the strength of its cultural reproduction mechanisms (see Iwabuchi 2002). Kubota's citation of figures for registered non-Japanese with the Ministry for Justice in 1999, as at 1.2% of the Japanese population, does not provide strong evidence of diverse ethnic and cultural difference when compared with the percentages of non-native born citizens in the UK, Australia or the USA for example. Even allowing for updating of data to 2008 with 2.08 million registered foreigners, now at 1.6% of the Japanese population (Norrie 2008a), this appears a weak argument especially when taken in relation to one of Kubota's other arguments. This is that one important impact of the Japanese government's globalization policy has been an increase in nationalistic values in the society more generally, and specifically in educational contexts (Kubota 2002, p16). The development of strong nationalist sentiments (and policies – see below) seems to cast doubts on her general argument of heterogeneity in Japan being an important factor in understanding Japanese society.

In contrast to Kubota (2002), the majority, like Huntington (1996), argue that Japan has long been seen as having a distinct culture and being relatively homogeneous. There is considerable

evidence that support the judgment of homogeneity. Certainly, although they have a particular perspective, Nationalist Japanese politicians currently still see Japan as being homogeneous (Norrie 2008c), furthermore Japanese is the official language of instruction in schools, while the Japanese Education Ministry maintains a strong control over school curriculum and assessment, especially issues relating to national identity and values, by which means the Japanese Education Ministry exercises considerable influence in developing and maintaining Japanese culture, values and identity. McVeigh (2004, p101) states that: *'Education Ministry officials are charged with the task of guiding, managing and promoting education, moral development, cultural activities, scientific progress, and religious matters. Their mission, like other ministries in Japan, is activist and goal-oriented'*. In effect there is substantial evidence that strong guidance via socialization permeates the school and economic systems (see McVeigh 2004). In addition, results from Hofstede (2001) and Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) research indicate that that Japanese respondents exhibit different patterns of cultural values to other Asian cultures, thus indicating evidence of distinctiveness and also cultural homogeneity (see Fallon 2008).

Sociology and anthropology-based approaches and their contribution to understanding Japanese international students

Sociological and anthropological research by numerous writers offers insights into understanding Asian and Japanese cultural issues. Hall (1959, 1976) developed a useful conceptualization of a continuum of difference between high context cultures (less explicit, more implicit) and low context cultures (more explicit and less implicit). Stewart (1972) drew attention to different concepts and social values in relation to a being-becoming-doing continuum that relate to time scales and longer term perspectives. These are important differences in relation to Australian culture and will be returned to later. But it is Hofstede (1984, 1994) in particular, who appears to offer the most practically important insights into the differences between Australian Anglo culture as encountered in Australian universities, and values held in Asian cultures.

Hofstede's four categories of cultural differences, which have had a strong impact upon the field of intercultural communication and organizational behaviour (see Owens 2005), and have proved useful in practical ways in improving understanding and practices in Australian university settings (Fallon 2008; Owens 2005), are based on quantitative data that was collected from 88,000 participants. However all respondents were male, they were all employees of one multinational organisation (IBM) and, while a number of Asian countries were included, there were no representatives from Africa (other than South Africa), Arab countries or Russia. The data as the basis for the analyses was collected over twenty years ago and it is certainly arguable

that cultural practices have changed over time since then, especially as result of globalization pressures (Lustig & Koester 2003, p135; Spring 2008). Later, more wide ranging studies by Hofstede have attempted to verify his earlier work (see Hofstede & Hofstede 2005). These facts notwithstanding, Hofstede's categories of power-distance tolerance, collectivism-individualism, uncertainty avoidance, femininity-masculinity are useful in understanding cultural differences and practices and providing a basis for effective interpersonal communication (Fallon 2008; Owens 2005).

Hofstede's categories and implications for learning

Power-distance tolerance (Hofstede 1984, 1994) has been defined by Lustig and Koester (2003, p117) as the 'degree to which the culture believes that institutional and organisational power should be distributed unequally and the decisions of power holders should be challenged or accepted'. Essentially this involves the acceptance or rejection of power or authority. Fallon (2008), in analyzing Hofstede's work and Asian students' writing practices, indicates that Asians, including Japanese, have higher scores and ranking on acceptance of power and authority than Australians and New Zealanders who are seen as more likely to challenge accounts given to them and the teachers. Using Hofstede's data, Fallon concludes that Japanese and other Asian students at universities are seen to be more respectful and less challenging, and are consequently likely to experience more difficulties in adjusting to Australian academic requirements of developing critical, personal accounts and positions.

Uncertainty-avoidance is described by Hofstede (1984, 1994) as involving the tolerance of the unpredictable and the ambiguous. Generally people from Japan, but also those from South Korea and Taiwan, feel threatened by ambiguity and unpredictability, while those from China, Hong Kong and Singapore tend to be more tolerant of these conditions (Fallon 2008). As Fallon (2008) argued, those with high scores, like the Japanese, expect structured learning and seek the right answers with teachers supposedly having all the right answers. Such students also believe that truth is absolute whereas in Australian academic culture truth is considered relative and assignments are structured around this belief. Fallon (2008) indicates that those who score highly on power-distance or uncertainty-avoidance will not view ownership of knowledge in the same ways as those with low scores on this dimension. The implications are that the issue of plagiarism, one of the major issues in Australian academic work, will be seen quite differently, with concomitant truth and guru status values possibly leading to unacknowledged citation of others' work.

Individualism-collectivism (Hofstede 1984, 1994) relates to the cultural roles and values given to individuals versus the group. People from collectivist cultures value the groups into which they are born, form strong bonds and they expect loyalty and protection. In contrast, in individualistic cultures individuals form loose, rather than strong, bonds and everyone tends to look after themselves and their own families. Hofstede's scores for Australians and New Zealanders are high as are rankings for this dimension, indicating strong individualistic tendencies whereas scores for other Asian cultures, and specifically the Japanese, are low. As Fallon (2008, p5) points out, the implications for students from Asian cultures are problems in understanding Australian university requirements regarding plagiarism as 'what constitutes cheating is far less clear', and creating personal and highly individual pieces of work may be difficult. She also makes the point that students from cultures valuing collectivism cannot be expected to understand new requirements quickly and abandon all they have been taught and experienced in the past.

The femininity-masculinity dimension of Hofstede's (1984, 1994) work is undoubtedly useful in considering individual differences since different cultures have different values, and there may be different values experienced in a new culture like the Australian one in interpersonal interaction (see Owens 2005). However, this dimension does not appear to be important in terms of policy and academic learning in Australia, and Fallon (2008) does not consider it in her analyses of the implications for academic writing. Regarding university policy and international students, this is an area where university policy needs to be considered gender neutral and certainly not discriminatory. Any university that promoted policies that were considered gender discriminatory would be accused of being sexist and contravene Australian anti-discrimination legislation. Australian Educational International (2000-2008), in collecting and presenting its data for use by policy makers and universities in Australia, does not do detailed gender breakdowns or highlight them in reporting. For this reason this research will not be examining gender issues as they would appear to have no, or limited relevance, for research into university policies to promote more effective learning for international students. That is not to say that they are not relevant in day-to-day teaching practice. However, the other categories identified by Hofstede do appear to have considerable practical importance in identifying sources of potential conflict in adjustment to Australian academic and cultural values at the policy level.

In summary, Hofstede's power-distance, uncertainty-avoidance and individualism-collectivism categories appear to have considerable usefulness in understanding the kind of problems Japanese international students may have in adapting to this Australian university context. Apart from Fallon's (2008) direct analysis of the potential impact of these categories upon Australian

academic writing, there is a substantial literature from the English language learning and intercultural communication perspectives that indicate that international students studying at Australian universities often encounter substantial problems in adaptation to the demands of the new culture (eg Phillips 1993; Owens 2005). In this there would appear to be critical periods. The cross-cultural communication literature generally identifies the first six months of study in Australia as being the most obvious period of culture shock (Choi 1997; Gundykunst 2003) and cross-cultural adjustment (Kim 1988).

Japanese youth culture and possible effects upon Japanese international students

Japanese youth culture has received wide attention in the Japanese popular media and in western academic research, and needs to be considered here as a possible source of influence upon Japanese students seeking to study in Australia and also a source of significant change in Japanese cultural values. Like the youth cultures that have long been evident and researched in western Anglo societies (eg, see Mussen et al 1965), it is seen as involving innovation and substantial challenges to the values of the older generations (Miller 2004, McVeigh 2004). While adolescent and young adult Japanese have driven tastes and markets in comics, anime and cell phone use (Ito & Okabe 2005), there are however important questions about the extent to which Japanese youth culture results in significant, major changes in important Japanese social values. The seemingly outrageous behaviour, in deviating from social norms and dyeing hair blonde, green or blue, huddling in social peer groups and seemingly resisting the pressures of adults in the context of Japanese society (see Miller 2004), does appear to represent severe breaks with Japanese traditional culture. However the depth of rupture with traditional Japanese social values is questionable.

It would appear that Japanese youth are possibly just establishing themselves as separate from both children and adults before moving on to accept adult responsibilities, having learned of the possibilities of youth culture from film and related American media forms. Ito and Okabe (2005) indicate that Japanese society has featured highly visible and transient youth cultures, but argue that much of the use of media, as in SMS messaging, is designed to create personal space in a society embodying socialization for the group, and in which the small size of houses allows little privacy. In Japanese society, where there is much pressure to conform to social rules benefiting the wider society, they argue that youth innovation and rebellion is meant to create personal space. In this, it is parallel with findings in numerous Anglo culture youth studies (see Berger 2005; Craig 1999; Lefrancois 1999). The pressures on Japanese youth, revealed through high suicide rates amongst adolescents and the numbers of adolescents who have found the pressures

so unbearable that they shut themselves away from the world (see Mathews & White 2004; McVeigh 2004), suggest that the creation of personal space by Japanese adolescents may be important survival and coping mechanisms in an era of globalization, change and challenge, especially in the employment area (see Mathews 2004, and below).

The transient nature of Japanese youth fads and fashions (Ito & Okabe 2005) suggests the likelihood of no long term change, given that major changes in values generally take a long period to become established in thinking, attitudes and performance. Judgments that adolescent rebellions from the 1960s onward have left no lasting impacts on the essential features and values of Japanese society (Mathews & White 2004; Sakurai 2004; White & Mathews 2004), also suggest this. Earlier research into intergenerational conflict between American adolescents and their parents revealed that the conflicts centred upon relatively socially unimportant things, such as hair style and clothing, and music listened to, rather than upon core social and personal values that both parents and adolescents shared (see Craig 1999; Lefrancois 1999). White and Mathews (2004), in systematic, detailed analysis of the evidence for major and deep-seated values change in Japanese society stemming from youth culture, indicate that the evidence of deep change is problematic and equivocal, although certainly societies change to some degree from generation to generation, even if only in the forms of technology that they use. The real changes to values that are occurring in Japanese society would appear, not to be occurring directly in response to the impact of youth culture, but to the major changes that are occurring through economic forces, technological change and the interconnectedness of nations brought about by globalization (Spring 2008).

Changes in Japanese values relating to employment

An important issue for this study on international Japanese student study in Australia at university level is Japanese values attached to preparing for a career and employment. This is an area that appears to be undergoing very significant change with the values of young Japanese and their parents appearing to converge, despite the efforts of the Japanese power hierarchy to maintain sets of values that are of direct social benefit to the nation, but which represent no real rewards or values for many ordinary working Japanese. Specifically the issues relate to *shushoku katsudo*, seeking career track employment related to the Japanese ideal (at least for males) of lifetime employment. There are a number of historical factors surrounding this concept and cultural ideal that indicate why it has lost its appeal to many Japanese. Historically the concept only originated from 1929, with Matsushita Konosuke credited with development of the system (Mathews 2004, p123). The system is designed to ensure close dedication by workers to

employers/large scale organizations, and rewards, including payment of housing and education expenses of children, are not unusual, with employees being rewarded for seniority and years of service rather than demonstrable productive output. However, only approximately 20% of employees worked for one company from school graduation to retirement, with prevalence of lifetime employment being much exaggerated (Mathews 2004, p122), probably because it served the interests of Japanese corporations and the Japanese government.

The introduction of the Japanese cultural ideal of employment for life with one organisation coincided with nationalist policy being directed towards expansion and occupation of other Asian countries. After the Second World War, the need for sustained efforts in national reconstruction and economic revival after the defeat of Japan, and the bombing of two major industrial cities (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), ensured its desirability. The bursting of the Japanese 'bubble economy' in the early 1990s, the impact of globalization of world trade and increased international competition in production from other Asian countries, and the need for greater flexibility with changing markets and circumstances, substantially changed the functional reasons for lifelong employment. In reality the need for relatively constant restructuring of organizations and renewal as a result of ongoing technical, social and economic changes as a result of globalization (Spring 2008) run counter to the continued existence of this model of organization and production. Corporate restructurings since 1997 have seen 'voluntary early retirement' become a feature of the employment scene and, in essence, the practical death of lifetime employment (Mathews 2004, p123). In effect Japanese real world systems can no longer deliver the ideal and the promised benefits, and the ideal's existence fails to allow for the flexibility necessary for enterprises in times of rapid technological and economic change. Furthermore, current research reveals that there are high rates of movement by those entering corporations within the first three years (Mathews 2004, p122), and that many employees, who are working in corporations still offering lifetime employment, are profoundly unhappy and lack loyalty and motivation because of the need to work hugely disproportionate numbers of hours (Mathews 2004).

Given these circumstances and actuality, it is no surprise that many Japanese parents appear to support their children's desire for greater individual freedom and happiness (Mathews 2004). Mathews (2004) reports numbers of his Japanese interviewees, both trying to enter employment and those employed in corporations, as seeking to fulfill their dreams of greater individual freedom and personal happiness. Since the lifetime employment system really never encouraged women into the corporate world to any great extent, they appear not to be espousing it or conveying belief in its value to their children. This also has coincided with changes in women's

views of their roles as mother and supporters of their family. Japanese women appear to encourage daughters to move beyond self-sacrifice for family to self-fulfillment and the possibility of work and career (see Nakano & Wagatsuma 2004). The low Japanese birth rate, resulting in recognition of need for substantially changed government policies (Norrie, 2008a), indicates that many Japanese women are no longer accepting of the traditionally expected roles. Together, all of these factors and issues would appear to indicate that there are major changes occurring in the values of Japanese society, and that these changes are not necessarily derived from a youth culture but represent substantial changes in the cultural values and ideals of many Japanese, on account of the realities of the changed economic and employment circumstances operating in Japan.

Overall, the absence of major social ruptures, despite the seeming outrage against Japanese youth cultures, would seem to indicate that the major social values continue to be shared between generations (White & Mathews 2004). Sakurai (2004) argues that the Japanese generation in protest in the 1960s, but who seemed to have little impact on the values of Japanese society, have succeeded now in rejecting isolationism and have embraced the concept of internationalization. This appears to offer insights into the motivation of Japanese international students in seeking out countries like Australia. This view also suggests continuity, gradual change and the sharing of values. Similarly the research undertaken by Nakano and Wagatsuma (2004) suggests that there is negotiation of values between the generations, although this research is limited to Japanese mothers and their unmarried daughters. McVeigh's (2004) arguments generally are that the socializing mechanisms in Japanese society are so strong that, despite inevitable youth protest, young Japanese still strongly hold to core Japanese social values, especially those involving interpersonal codes of conduct and relationships.

Continuity of important values in society despite youth cultures

In the 1960s, Anglo cultures, particularly the USA, UK and Australia, were seriously concerned about the youth cultures and apparent conflict between generations. Intensive, rigorous research into variables related to intergenerational conflict and social values revealed that, despite the media attention and the sensationalist claims based on relatively unsophisticated research, like that of Coleman (1961), of youth cultures severely disregarding conventional adult values, there was little real evidence of serious conflict and disjuncture between the values of youth and their parents (eg see Bandura 1964; Dunphy 1963). Much research since then has confirmed this, and the current position is that generally relations between adolescents and their parents are good, that they share very similar values on important issues, but that some conflict is inevitable given

different generational life experiences and the need for adolescents to develop adult degrees of independence and skills related to mature adult roles (eg see Berger 2005, pp396-400; Craig 1999, pp377-385; Lefrancois 1999, pp346-350). Japanese critics and commentators themselves frequently refer to the adolescent youth culture as involving a moratorium. Saito (1999, p28), for example, has described Japanese youth as the 'moratorium' society, due to their putting off accepting what are, in Japan, considered to be the responsibilities and duties of adulthood. Moratorium, it should be noted, itself means an intervening period and suspension, but not distinct and definite rejection of values.

It also needs to be borne in mind in considering issues of youth culture that, in a society like Japan where social values related to hierarchy and social power are very strong and deeply ingrained (see Hofstede 1994, 2001), any slight deviation from the accepted norms are likely to be seen as challenging the older generation, no matter how minor the values are in terms of the overall social cohesion and interrelatedness. While no research into the values of Japanese parents and their offspring, of parallel depth, rigour and sophistication of research methods to the Anglo culture studies, has been located, there is good reason to believe that, although there are some changes brought about through youth culture, that the values generally are shared by the generations (see above). Thus the position in this research is that, although the issues of change stemming for youth culture must be seen as problematic, the essential values of Japanese society are generally embodied in young people.

The importance of Japanese social values and mores in understanding their expectations

The following sections look at conventional Japanese social values and mores that appear to be widely held, and which Japanese international students will bring them when they enroll in Australian universities. It is argued that the learning needs and expectations, that manifest themselves in the Australian academic environment, to a considerable degree will have their origins in these Japanese mores and values that are foundational in interpersonal relationships and communication in Japanese society. Also important are the educational experiences that the Japanese students have experienced and which have already been covered in this literature review (see above). The following sections on Japanese cultural markers involve the integration of numerous sources, hitherto not well integrated, that have potential to assist with the development of specific research questions relating to learning needs and expectations in this research. They also provide a more integrated source for those seriously interested in more effective communication with Japanese international students, as well as more effective teaching,

program development and policy formulation. These cultural markers will be considered in relation to educational and interpersonal relationship issues as these are seen as most relevant.

First, however, the following section will outline some of the religious values prevalent in Japan as these tend to underpin Japanese cultural values. Understanding of the substantially different religious beliefs, practices and cultural values between Japan and Australia will indicate why the transition to Australian culture may be difficult for Japanese international students, and why university support policies may be so important for adjustment.

Japanese body language, that is non-verbal communication, also is of very considerable importance beyond the issues of religious belief and cultural values which will now be reviewed. Body language codes and underlying meaning are important for more fully understanding individual differences, and the importance of individual agency and choice (Marginson & Sawir 1995), because it is through different forms of body language, for example, in a silence, that the Japanese individual conveys quite different meanings (Seltman 1991). However, as important as Japanese body language is, its importance is greatest in direct interpersonal communication and teaching, and thus coverage is seen to lie outside the scope of this research and literature review. Seltman (1991) provides a very good, detailed analysis of the different forms of Japanese body language codes and of their importance in direct, face-to-face communication with Japanese students, and his work is drawn upon, where relevant, in the following sections.

Religion in education and Japan's roots

The country's religious and anthropological history is well documented (see Anesaki 1963; Benedict 1967; Kaltenmark 1969; Befu 1971; McNaughton 1971; Bofeld 1985; Chang 1985; Yen Mah 2000). This literature provides a basis for understanding the Japan of the twenty first century, and particularly the important role that religion plays in education. The Japan of today has been shaped by a number of religious influences. The first of these is Shinto, often referred to as the indigenous or original religion (Anesaki 1963, p6), the second Confucianism from northern China, and the third Buddhism from India via China. It is not the purpose of this research to explore in detail each of these religions; however it is important to understand the impact of these influences upon the Japan of the twenty first century, and how religious values influence codes of manners, and beliefs, and help create expectations. Reader et al (1993) comment that in 1990, a survey conducted by the Keizai Koho Centre (Economic Reporting Centre) in Tokyo found that 112,203,000 Japanese people maintained that they followed Shinto beliefs, 93,396,000 claimed to follow Buddhism, 1,422,000 identified with the Christian faith, with a further 11,412,000 following 'other religions'. At the time of the survey, the population of

Japan was about 120,000,000, thus suggesting that numbers of Japanese people follow more than one faith or set of beliefs.

Shinto

If Japanese mythology is to be believed, Japan was created through a process shrouded in mystery, molten matter and mythology. 'Beings' were developed from eggs and molten chaos and developed into *kami* or 'gods' who endured the banishments into the underworld and purifying rivers. From this chaos *Shinto* was created. This same *Shinto* continues to influence Japanese people in almost all they do today. It is not a religion as such with a deity, the word *Shinto* translates as 'Way of the Gods' (Buruma 1995, p3). The word *Shinto* itself however was not used until the sixth-century, to differentiate it from the new religion that entered the country at that time, Buddhism.

Integral to Shinto, and thus to Japanese society, are the many Shinto festivals and beliefs. When job hunting, young people go to the shrine to pray to the job hunting god, before examinations to the education god, when trying to conceive, to the conception god. There are numerous ceremonies where men walk across fire, roll in the snow wearing only a loin cloth and perform other such acts to show obedience, subservience and perhaps most of all, that they can 'take it' and will '*gambaru*' - 'do their best' for the group to which they belong, until we arrive at the largest group – Japan the country. There is another side to Shinto, one which through early myths produced an Imperial family, directly descended from the gods who created the country, thus creating a special relationship between the 'first family' and the *kami* (Gods) (Andreasen 1993, p 65).

Buddhism

Concurrently with Shinto practices, Buddhism also plays an important role in Japanese life. Anesaki (1963, p7) maintains that Buddhism was accepted into Shinto Japan to provide an 'afterlife', something that the indigenous gods did not provide. Through the influence of Buddhism, the arts and literature began to flourish in the country, followed by science, letters and philosophy (Anesaki 1963, p12). Zen philosophies are an important part of Buddhism. Zen was introduced to Japan at a time when not only were the military men becoming rulers and administrators, but there was also a need for a religion to train the ruling class in the 'mental firmness' and 'resolute action' whilst satisfying their spiritual aspirations. Zen met these requirements since it could be practised in camp and was able to both invigorate, or settle the mind (Anesaki 1963, p210). The importance of 'mental firmness' and 'resolute action' are most evident in the almost universally held concept in Japan of '*gambaru*' (doing one's best). Yen

Mah (2000, pp78-79) describes the aim of Zen as being to *'awaken the student to the realization of his own enlightenment...'* and points out that the character for the word in Japanese and also in Chinese where the character originally came from are pronounced differently, but share the same meaning. The character was originally derived from the Indian word *dhyana*, meaning 'meditation'. Buddhism is not the only additional influence, yet another religion in Japan is based upon the thoughts of Confucius.

Kaltenmark (1969, pp1-2) points out that the first school of wisdom in China was founded early in the 5th BC, by K'ung Ch'iu, better known as Confucius, with his ideal being an orderly state organized on feudal lines with rival leaders kept in place through a balance between religion and tradition. He saw a need for, and preached or taught, the ethic of perfecting the individual mind leading to a 'self cultivation', seeing this as a prime requirement for good government (Kaltenmark 1969, p3). Through this, the main duty of all citizens, was to observe the rites and respect the hierarchies (Kaltenmark 1969, p4). This is still evident in the vertical society in the Japan of today. Seltman (1991, Chapter 6, p1) indicates that: *'This Confucian educational tradition ...encourages students to remain silent, placing emphasis upon non-verbal communication in classroom communication.'* He also notes that: *'The Confucian ethic of authority, benevolence, and paternal responsibility is still very much a part of Japanese national education policy'* (Seltman, 1991, Introduction, p1).

Confucian beliefs and ideals however do not stand in isolation, but in conjunction with Taoism. Many other schools of thought emerged at that time and in later centuries BC, however the most notable was probably that of Lao Tzu, and the school of philosophers known as the Taoist school (McNaughton 1971, p7).

Taoism

Taoism itself inhabits what Robinet (1997) describes as a 'rational' world, and has an important role to play in education in Japan today. Chang suggests that Taoist education has a direct effect upon an individual's satisfaction with life, taking this one step further to the hypothesis that a wrong education can lead to an increase in dissatisfaction resulting in, amongst other things, anti-social behaviour (Chang 1985, p41). The teaching of subjects such as mathematics, science, physics, literature and sports are deemed in Taoist thought to be 'dead knowledge' since there is the belief that they lead to egoism and ambition, which in turn can develop into a belief that an identity can be developed and that satisfaction can be found in material possessions (Chang 1985, p42).

The Taoist view of education

In the Taoist view, children should first be taught how to live, then taught how to live 'better' and finally how to live longer. In this way Chang suggests, the knowledge attained can be used for the rest of one's life (Chang 1985, p42).

Maslow (1971) comments on the relevance and importance of the Taoist approach to education more generally, even in the Western world, particular the non-interventionist approach, by pointing out that it is important to find what is best for children by looking for techniques to develop techniques, through which the children themselves are able to express what is best for them (Maslow 1971, p14). Taking this one step further, the Taoistic view is to learn not to control the child but to trust the child's impulses towards growth and self actualization, that is putting greater stress on spontaneity and autonomy rather than prediction or external control.

If Maslow is suggesting that in an educational context, this leads to asking rather than telling, ie making non-intruding, non-controlling, non-interfering observations rather than controlling manipulation, being receptive and passive rather than active and forceful (Maslow 1971, p15), he is in fact following Lao-Tzu's teachings. This is that it is always better to leave things to the Tao, letting it take its natural course without interference (Blofeld 1985, p3), albeit within the confinement of the surrounding society with its expectations of each member of the group. It could perhaps be argued that the passivity demonstrated by Japanese students in class is in fact the non-intruding, non-controlling, non-interfering Tao. Robinet (1997, p26) comments that two of the meanings or ideas behind the word Tao are 'way', which can be read as 'rule of life', and 'method', which can be thought of as 'process'.

Chang suggests that if a student has understood the meaning of life as a young child, the individual will be in a better position in secondary education to apply self to disciplines such as mathematics and literature, thus speeding up the evolution of man and the protection of the natural ways in the universe (Chang 1985, p42). Thus when the Taoist way is applied to the process of education, the outcomes are, typically, from the Taoist perspective, positive. Seltman (1991, Chapter 6, p1) contrasts the Western Socratic educational tradition of '*exposing false beliefs and eliciting truth through dialectics*' with Japanese education, arguing that: '*Japanese education evolves out of Buddhist and Taoist philosophy, where all intellectually inspired ideas are suspect, experience and intuition taking precedence over thought. This places more emphasis upon the gestalt of each moment and not the ideas behind them.*'

Japanese cultural values in an Australian setting

Japanese students are not known for being outgoing and talkative. Reischauer (1977, p116) comments that in a highly homogenous society such as Japan, nonverbal communication may have been easier to develop than in societies with more diverse cultures requiring greater verbal skills. Shyness in the Japanese occurs from childhood through to adolescence, but is particularly the case in college or tertiary level students (Seltman 1991). Whereas this may lead to silence in the classroom, it is important to recognize that silence is also an integral aspect of Japanese communication strategies (see below).

Kenrick (1988, p104) comments that: *'The Japanese hesitate to employ language explicitly to convey definite thoughts or intentions'*, whilst Lustig and Koester (1993, p231) cite Morsbach (1988) who reminds us that to the Japanese, westerners tend to be regarded as 'verbose', which seems to indicate a shallow character. In an Australian setting, particularly in an academic setting, silence may easily be mistaken for either shyness, or an inability to understand either linguistically or conceptually. This 'inability' to participate in the class caused by socio-cultural expectations may seriously impact upon the students' effective learning. Ramsey (1984, p121) reminds us that Japanese interlocutors rely, not just on what is and is not said, but also on intuition and sensitivity, some of which is based upon the concept of *haragei* - heart to heart communication (Nakajima 1985, p232), but which in this context does not mean a 'conversation from the soul' – a direct translation, but rather 'guessing the innermost thoughts of the other' so that they do not have to explain (Ramsey 1984, p121). Kenrick (1988, p109) indicates that, by definition, *haragei* is the opposite of debate. For a Japanese student in an academic setting in Australia this notion of inference in an unknown educational setting has the potential to hinder effective learning, where a student tries to look for meanings or clues that may not be there. Abe, Hirai, Takagi, and Tsukada (2005) commented perceptively that, whereas Japanese students cannot 'pick up' clues from a silent academic or member of the support staff in a non Japanese environment, the reverse is also true.

Japanese cultural stepping stones: Relationship recognition

Relationship recognition is an integral part of Japanese society, and underpins virtually all aspects of Japanese interlocution since within Japanese culture there are clearly defined informants that dictate the relationship that A has with B. An important element for success in learning by Japanese students is for Australian teachers to understand Japanese social norms, and the cultural expectations brought to Australia that the Japanese students see linking student and teacher through a dependency relationship '*amae*'. Personal discussions have indicated that

many female high school students will prepare lunch for male teachers and bring chocolate on Valentine's Day, 'fawning' as they do so, demonstrating *amae* (Kudo 2005a). Through this relationship dependency is created – for the student academic assistance, for the teacher the feeling of being needed, of having a role to play in a student's education, albeit their professional role. The relationship thus created will typically see the student continue to receive advice and support after graduation from high school, and usually academics and teachers will go to the weddings of their students. For tertiary level Japanese students in Australia, that concept of dependency continues, since being 'dependent upon' or looking up to an individual or to a group for support and guidance, is extremely important placing each involved in a definable role. Take that group away however, and the individual, particularly the young person, is often at a loss.

An Australian academic, teaching Japanese students and who requested anonymity, commented that, in his students' eyes, his role was 'to be depended upon' to the degree of solving all their problems – whether related to their academic studies or not. Interlinked with this was their expectation that not only could he solve their problem/s, but that he would. The students were demonstrating *amae* (see below and Kudo 2005a).

Experience indicates that the newly arrived Japanese students expect to be provided with information and assistance that an Australian university may perceive as being the students' responsibility to procure. Should the institution not accommodate the student's needs however, this may be perceived negatively. Japanese students do seek advice from students who have already studied in Australia in terms of institutions and experiences, (refer to the Results chapter), with potentially negative outcomes for an institution. This expectation is linked to *amae*, one of Japan's most important socio-cultural attributes.

Important Japanese socio-cultural markers

Amae

This first of the concepts referred to is '*amae*', the literal translation of which is 'sweet dependency' (Kojima & Crane 1987, p6), and means, in its most basic sense, 'dependence'. John Bester, translator of Takeo Doi's *The Anatomy of Dependence* into the English language, describes *amae* as being at the very fiber of Japanese society (Doi 1971, p7). The concept of '*amae*', comes from the dependence a child feels at the mother's breast and the child's unwillingness to be removed from this comfort and thrown into the real world, ie to face reality (Doi 1971, p7). Doi (1971, p20) likens *amae* in childhood to Freud's 'the child's primary object choice' that is, the parent. It can be interpreted in a number of ways dependent upon usage, yet remaining within that basic meaning:

Amae Psychological dependence (upon another's good will) (Nakajima 1985, p16)

Amaekko A spoiled child. (Nakajima 1985, p16)

Amaeru (verb) behave like a spoiled child, / coax, fawn upon, flirt (dally) (with) / presume (up -) on, take advantage of (Iwasaki 1960, p7); play the baby (to) / play the coquette (to) / in a coquettish tone / fawn on (*a person*) / coax: coax *one's* mother into buying sweets for *one* / presume upon *another's* love, take advantage of / I will take you at your kind word (Nakajima 1985, p16); to pursue nurturance or indulgence (White 1987, p23).

Amae in the family

Edwin Reischauer (1977), American ambassador to Japan in the 1960s, described how the Japanese infant is reared in such a way that the child becomes quite dependent upon others, particularly the mother, in a way that would be most unusual in Western society. He pointed out that the child becomes an adult – still dependent and still basking in the affections of others (Reischauer 1977, pp140-141). This ability to *amaeru* is critical to the success in society of the Japanese individual in that person's education, workplace and sporting success. White (1987, p23) takes Reischauer's point further, pointing out that the role of the mother, through the child rearing practices employed in Japan, is to develop a young person who is able to function in both the total social environment and also in the specific social environment. The former acceptance is in society, where not only incentive, but also satisfaction, is provided by being accepted as part of the group. The latter is within the educational environment (White 1987, p23). The incentive referred to is 'to *amaeru*', since by functioning in this way, relationships are being developed that will provide support in both directions, and also validate the role each party is expected to play, and thus confirm the position of each individual within the larger group.

There are a number of sources that describe the expectations and its social formation. Christopher (1984 p61) for example describes how Japanese children '*...bask in maternal love that is utterly supportive and uncritical*'. Shields (1989, p5) reports that '*Mothers in Japan are very indulgent with their children...*'. Singleton (1967) suggests that, within the family (and also the kindergarten and elementary school), there is no such thing as a naughty or willful child, with there being numerous *ii ko* (good child) reinforcements. The Japanese feeling is simply that the child just 'does not understand' (Singleton 1995, p14). White (1984) indicates that the basic premise in child rearing in Japan appears to be 'never go against the child'. This may be linked to Taoism. The ability to get the child to *wakaraseru* (understand) can be a long process through which the mother's goals become those of the child (White 1984, pp3-6). Imamura (1995, p17)

points out that there are three demands placed on the mother regarding her child, being the preservation, growth and acceptability of that child. Acceptability is probably the most critical aspect and will be ultimately demonstrated through her child's educational and employment achievements. Through learning to both get what is given and, more importantly, learning to get somebody to give, the Japanese infant is in fact developing the basic groundwork required for the future, to both *amaeru*, and to be the one to whom, in the future, someone else will *amaeru*.

This important concept, *amae*, continues throughout life, the dependency changing from the mother's breast, to the school, to the company, and possibly the expectations of dependency at an Australian university. That uniform behaviour seen in Japanese people relates directly to the concept of *amae*, where each is dependent upon the group as a whole, with the security provided by the group ensuring that each member feels comfortable. Japanese people are known for their 'group' society, from honeymoon package tours, to wearing the same dark suits to work, to the company uniform issued to employees by the vast majority of companies.

***Amae* in education**

Japanese parents are also dependent upon their child's educator since they see the teacher as the provider of discipline for their offspring. To the parents, the affection that they feel for their children prevents them from fully exercising control over them (Rohlen 1983, p197). Singleton, when discussing the development of the group identity within the school system, takes this further by identifying two types of discipline, strict (*kibishii*) and indulgent (*amae*) (Shields 1989, p13; Singleton 1995, p13). The word *amae* means both sweetness and indulgence and describes the state where a person is being allowed to *amaeru* particularly to a teacher who is being lenient. Parents like their children's teachers to be *kibishii* and to discipline their children for the reasons mentioned.

There is one further aspect of dependency within the Japanese educational system which Duke (1986) brings to our attention, the importance of *kumi* (a class). The *kumi* is the commencement of group identity training, and starts on day one of year one of the educational ladder. Duke (1986, p25) goes so far as to suggest that this is the initial training for the eventual corporate employee. The students in the group will stay together for two years at least with the same teacher. They will sit in the same seat for about three months and will learn very quickly to be dependent upon and depended upon by the rest of the class – the group.

Amae is at the centre of all relationships – both educational and otherwise. Abe et al (2005) cite Doi (1973) in commenting that *amae* is to behave self indulgently, presuming upon the special

relationship between the two. It is practised, they maintain, when one presumes the existence of a relationship in which you can depend upon the other's good will, and expect that the other would accept your self-indulgence and take care of your needs. The relationship could be a role relationship, for example a student and an academic staff member, as well as being a personal relationship within the family. For the Japanese student in Australia, their attempts to *amaeru* to academic staff may be interpreted in a wide range of ways, from the basic meaning of dependency, to a non-verbal request for some form of special treatment, through to an attempt to obtain favour.

Enryo

Whereas *amae* is practiced where there is the presumption of the existence of a relationship, Abe et al (2005), citing De Mente (1981), comment that *enryo* is practised where there are barriers between people who do not have an *amae* relationship, thus one cannot assume too much from the other. *Enryo* can be viewed as the counter weight to *amae*, when one considers the situation from a distance by holding back, or putting the others' needs first. Doi (1971, p30) comments that *enryo*, can be interpreted as 'consideration'. It is in effect a feeling of concern, apprehension or consideration towards the person to whom an individual is, or wishes to *amaeru*, in case the intended recipient fails to accept the *amae* as enthusiastically as hoped for.

Doi (1971, p39) also comments upon why *enryo* is practiced, maintaining that: '*...one holds back with the idea that one must not presume too much (amaeru) on the other's good will. The fear is at work, in other words, that unless one holds back, one will be thought impertinent and disliked accordingly. One might say that enryo is an inverted form of amae*'.

The concept of holding back or demonstrating *enryo* is important since it demonstrates that the individual understands the importance of the twin attributes of *amae* and *enryo* and acknowledges in the case of the latter, that there may not be a relationship in place to presume upon. This is particularly the case for Japanese students in Australia where attempts to *amae* may be misinterpreted, but so may be attempts to show *enryo*. White comments that some *kikokushijo*, (returnee students), demonstrate a lack of *enryo* – of hesitation, of holding back, of demonstrating 'modesty' (White 1993, p202). For Japanese students in Australia, modesty may be perceived in a range of ways such as demonstrating shyness, lack of understanding or ability to articulate coherently, rather than it being seen as a desirable cultural attribute as it is in Japan. Loveday (1982, p5) comments that Japanese need to develop what to them may be perceived as an 'arrogant gruffness' if they are to express opinions.

Chinmoku

Chinmoku, or silence, is a reflective process, seen as a time for thought, for analysis of the situation in order to formulate an opinion, or for consideration for determining how to express oneself in an appropriate way (Nikka Consulting 2005). Abe et al (2005) cite Hall (1998), commenting that in such a high culture as Japan, messages are given and meanings are understood through silence, not through words as is typically the case in low cultures. For the Japanese student in a low culture such as Australia, the message is verbal and thus problematic.

Seltman (1991, Chapter 4, p1) argues that: *'While we in the West have fine-tuned ourselves to listen for hidden meaning in the words, trying to read between the lines, Japanese students listen to the silences, for hidden innuendo and deeper meaning, almost as if reading between the words. Just as the white space on the paper in Japanese graphics is an integral part of the design, spoken Japanese flows among the silent spaces. Silence speaks loudly and clearly to the Japanese, much like the emptiness found in Zen rhetoric, or the silent spaces surrounding the notes of a bamboo flute.'* There are many examples in Japanese culture where silence expresses meaning with great force or subliminal elegance.

Seltman (1991) maintains that in the English language classroom, where fluency is developed through spontaneous use of the new language, silence can be frustrating for the teacher, as they struggle to understand what has caused the silence and how it may be overcome. Japanese students at the tertiary level in Australia may also demonstrate silence as they often assume there is only one specific way to answer, as is customary in test-oriented Japanese education. Silence signals to the Japanese teacher to move on to the next student, maintaining the flow and harmony within the classroom. A western student may use silence to draw the listener in, to slow down the flow of events, or encourage the teacher and classmates to pay attention while the student justifies or explains.

For a Japanese student, in Japan or elsewhere, silence may represent an inability to respond due to lack of contextual or linguistic understanding, shyness, or not knowing how to break into a discussion. An Australian student may try and explain his dilemma, the Japanese student, particularly the majority, unfamiliar with foreign expectations, will tend to become more reticent. Seldom will the student abandon the silence. This may appear to be obstinacy from the viewpoint of a non-Japanese instructor. To the student however, either silence or the correct answer is the only socially acceptable reaction. The teacher needs either to instruct the student in a variety of correct reactions, or to design exercises which take the spotlight off the student. The student's identity among his or her peers is usually the student's first concern. From the students'

perspective, their ability to adjust to their own society will serve them far more than acquiring a foreign style of expression. Students who consistently follow the behaviour patterns of the target culture, and not their own, may face social ostracism and even employment and marriage problems further down the line. Though this may seem extreme, it is a factor that students and analysts often use to explain student behaviour in the EFL classroom (Seltman 1991).

Two examples of the non-participatory role played by the tertiary level student in Japan and potentially brought to Australia, documented in a report produced by participants of the November 2002, AIEJ/UNESCO youth exchange program of which the researcher was a participant, demonstrate this point. After five national universities were visited in the Kansai region of Japan, it was noted:

'The number of lectures and seminars observed indicated quite clearly that the teaching system used in Japan remains didactic, frequently with minimal input from students. Most Japanese students were seen sleeping in class and/or playing with mobile telephones' (Barke et al. 2002a, p22).

An academic from a participating New Zealand University institution commented: *'In the speed reading class, the students appeared to be playing a very passive role within the classroom context – answering questions directed at them by the lecturer when necessary but speaking very little otherwise'* (Barke et al. 2002a, p37).

The focus of the classes were typically either Japanese language training for foreigners, English language training for Japanese, or what are somewhat euphemistically considered to be international programs taught in English for both Japanese students and native speakers of English. The non-participatory role played by Japanese students at the university level demonstrated, after a not insignificant number and range of classes and lectures in both Japanese and English were audited, the very different approaches in Australia and Japan.

In many cases, but particularly in a class focusing on reading English, at institution '3' there was little if any interaction at all between the academic and his students, all of whom sat at the back of the room, some twenty metres from the podium behind which the academic sat, barely visible. Students primarily 'read', slept or played with mobile telephones. When a question was occasionally asked by the lecturer, who assigned questions according to the class roll, there was either a continuation of the silence or a barely audible mumbled response. Personal discussions with a Japanese colleague, Nakajima (2004, Personal communication), after observing a class where not a word was uttered by any student, where no questions were asked either during or

after the session, where some slept and where few were seen to write anything, confirmed that: '*Japanese students do not ask questions*'.

The implications for a student accustomed to 'studying' in this way subsequently enrolling in the Australian tertiary sector with different expectations of active involvement are potentially serious. Such an approach can impact upon the student's ability to function, thus not only preventing effective learning from taking place, but also creating a scenario which may be injurious to the student's psychological health. Equally as important is the need for Australian academic staff to be cognizant that their Japanese students are *not* going to ask questions with ease, but that their apparent silence does not necessarily mean a lack of comprehension or linguistic ability to do so. What it does indicate, is that the Japanese students studying in Australia typically bring with them a collection of teaching and learning experiences acquired in the Japanese educational system, and an expectation that things will be the same in Australia. Understanding these expectations and their impact upon the students learning is a critical component for effective learning to occur for Japanese students in an Australian university.

Giri/Ninjo

The partnership between *giri* and *ninjo* is, like *amae*, central to the functioning of Japanese society. Translations of the two words cover a range of concepts based on the same themes of 'obligation' and 'humanness'. To owe *giri* however one must have received something, passively or otherwise. This then also involves a sense of *on*, of obligation.

Ninjo Human feeling (Doi 1971, p33); Humanness/sympathy/kindness/humane/human nature (Nakajima 1985, p667); Humanity/sympathy/kindness/humane (Iwasaki 1960, p 33).

Giri an obligation, duty, justice / strong sense of duty/ faithful/conscientious/ from a sense of duty (Nakajima 1985, p198); duty, an obligation, justice (Iwasaki 1960, p100); social obligation (Doi 1971, p 3).

Gambaru hold [stand out] / persist / (Nakajima 1985, p185) refuse to give in (Storm 1993, p42) is another extremely important cultural attribute equating with doing one's best, and is of particular importance in the educational field where students are extolled to ***ganbatte*** (v), (i.e. to do one's best).

Shikataganai (it cannot be helped); this expression is almost the opposite of ***gambaru*** - since if one has been seen to be doing one's best and yet has still not succeeded, one is vindicated by having demonstrated persistence. The response to 'failure' therefore is ***shikataganai***.

Personal experience of the researcher has been that, even in an educational situation where ostensibly no personal relationship exists other than that of an academic or an administrator and a student, if the staff member for example cannot provide the answer to the student's question, their response would be to say *Moshiwaki ga nai* which is in effect an apology meaning 'I cannot defend myself for not being able to meet your needs'. Conversely, where the answer is available, the response is *Moshiwaki ga tatsu*: the staff member has sufficiently vindicated themselves, ie has sufficient reasons to prove that one has repaid a debt to another individual, so that one may assume a position commensurate with that favour having been fulfilled (Sugawara 1985, p20). In this scenario, vindication is through the answer being available. The assistance of the academic or an administrator, which illustrates clearly that Sugawara highlights the close link between gratitude and apology, the former for receiving the favour, ie the student asking the question, the latter by not being able to suitably repay the debt, ie not being able to meet the student's needs. The converse leads to the gratitude aspect of the interaction, being also mixed with guilt and anxiety about having the ability to repay (Sugawara, 1985 p21).

It is also important to consider the concept of 'on' in Japanese society.

On a kindness/a favour/an obligation/a debt of gratitude, (Nakajima 1985, p702).

On, the favour or kindness creates the *giri*, the obligation or duty to repay the favor. The *giri* thus created, must now be repaid. To western eyes however the *on* that created the *giri* may be seen as something so minor, so insignificant as not to warrant a second thought. It may also be seen as something second nature that one human being does for another, perhaps due to social obligation, such as holding the door open. It may also be viewed as something that any individual would do without a second thought simply because it is the 'right thing to do', such as assisting an elderly person cross the road.

Giri and *on* are in a sense, two sides of 'obligation', *giri* however pertains to a specific obligation implicit in a relationship, whereas *on* refers to debts of personal gratitude (Doi 1985, p75).

The twin concepts of '*giri*' and '*ninjo*' may appear to be opposites, but Doi (1971, p33) maintains that they do in fact exist with a form of 'organic relationship' to each other. To Doi, *ninjo*, that concept of 'human feeling' is spontaneous within the parent / child or sibling relationship, but can appear artificially within some types of relationship (Doi 1971, p34). Nakajima and Iwasaki have both, as cited above, used the English word 'sympathy' as being one meaning of *ninjo* and Doi goes on to discuss how, for some, the perceived clash between *giri* and *ninjo* is a fact a clash between *giri* and *giri* (Doi 1971, p34). He cites the Japanese saying 'to

incur *on* through a single night's stay'. In other words when one receives a kindness (*ninjo*) that *on* has incurred a *giri* (Doi 1971, p34). In the educational arena, a teacher for example, through providing extra help to a student, is now 'owed' *giri*. In the Australian context however, the Japanese student may feel that a gift must now be presented, which may be interpreted in ways other than a simple 'thank you'. *Amae* is the link, it is the relationship between the *on* where a kindness has been received and paid for even if with a 'thank you' and the *giri* where the nature of the relationship creates the dependency. This is perhaps compounded by *gimu* the 'sense of duty' or loyalty, particularly to one's family or to the Emperor, that exists in conjunction with *giri*. *Gimu* can never be repaid (Ezrati 1999, p183).

Sugawara (1985, p19) explains *giri* as being '*...an ethical norm which is an internal law and, in a narrower sense can be said to be the obligation or duty to repay favours or kindnesses*'. Although Sugawara's text is aimed at those wishing a deeper understanding of the Japanese language, his discussion on *giri* looks at the history behind the concept and highlights the importance of the concept when considering Japanese people overseas.

The basis of *giri* is, in its most basic terms, that no favour can be accepted, no debt incurred without being compensated for in some way (Sugawara 1985, p19). This, Sugiwara (1985) maintains, came from the time when Japan was a closed society and developing in relatively undisturbed isolation from the rest of the world. This norm of conduct continues to be the ethical rule which governs all human and social relations in Japan (Sugawara 1985, p19), including within the educational world.

One must also consider that *giri* is not necessarily something based on a financial debt. That debt can be incurred through the receipt of a 'special favour', for example, assistance with membership to a particular club, being taught by a teacher, or being assisted in finding a job (Sugawara 1985, p20). To our Western eyes, we would be in debt to someone for their simply having done their job. To the Japanese students in Australia – they may well be in debt to their teachers for having taught them in such a way that they were able to enter an Australian university. The debt will be repaid by the student being successful. Sugawara's comprehensive definition of *giri ga tatsu*, that is the state one is in when one 'owes' *giri* is useful: '*when one is indebted to someone else, he must repay that debt in such a way that he (the debtor), the debtee and the society at large recognized the debt sufficiently repaid so as to re-establish the same relationship between the debtor and the debtee that held sway before the debt was incurred – the debtee and the debtor must psychologically regain some balance of equality*' (Sugawara 1985, p20).

The word *on* as illustrated earlier carries the concept of the ‘something’ received from someone else. Benedict reminds us that the very concept of *on* is as relevant to the day to day life of a Japanese person as it is to the past, since that indebtedness to the past prescribes all daily actions and decisions. Furthermore, all day to day contact with other people increases indebtedness in the present (Benedict 1967, p68). Parental love, that received from one’s ‘lord’, that received from the Emperor are all types of *on*. As has been indicated, one also receives *on* from one’s school and one’s teachers (Benedict 1967, p82). Face is lost when one cannot comply with or fulfill the expectations of one’s obligations.

***Giri* in the family**

To a Japanese person, *on*, in this context, has traditionally meant that without one’s parents, the individual would not exist. The oriental concept of filial piety, through which parents are in the strategic position of having authority over their children (Benedict 1967, p70) is, in fact, *on*. In the first stage of Eriksson’s, psycho-social development, albeit from an American perspective, through the developing relationship with the infant’s caregiver, the infant is developing the groundwork required for the future, ‘to get to be a giver’ by learning, through ‘getting what is given’ and learning to ‘get somebody to give’ (Erikson & Erikson 1997, p36) The child is learning from an early stage to ‘give’ *on* and to owe *giri*. In the Japanese scenario however, the restrictions that lead to that greater self decrease as the infant grows and *giri* increases. The more one grows, the more *giri* one owes, be it to one’s parent, one’s teacher, and one’s spouse or to one’s employer.

There is a limitless devotion within the family context that Benedict indicates goes hand in hand with *on* (Benedict 1967, p70). It is the debt that Japanese children must repay to their families for, not only having brought them into this world, but for also having provided them with the tools to become a member of Japanese society. Part of this is through the concept of *amae* as discussed earlier. Although Benedict (1967, p177) suggests that ‘freedom’ does not re-enter the equation until the individual reaches about sixty years of age, there is evidence to suggest that a not insignificant number of Japanese students come to Australia looking for and finding that freedom (see Results and Discussion chapters). The complication here is the conditioned learning that may operate selectively, and without self-awareness. Benedict’s comments, mirror Joan Erikson’s point, ie physical issues are perhaps greatest upon the minds of those attaining old age, as independence, self-esteem and confidence weaken (Erikson & Erikson 1997, p106). Thus the individual’s greatest *giri* is owed to self.

The Japanese parents will often call in the *giri* in later life when the expectation is that their children, usually the eldest son will take care of them, but perhaps more importantly, that their grandchildren will be brought up the way their parents had been. This is seen as a return on the indebtedness one had to one's own parents (Benedict 1967, p71). Benedict cites a Japanese saying which illustrates this point: '*Only after a person is himself a parent does he know how indebted he is to his own parents*' (Benedict 1967, p71).

It is interesting to reflect upon the way that Japanese mothers bring up their children and compare this with the 'western' way of child rearing. Benedict describes the American way of upbringing as putting the child on a schedule (Benedict 1967, p177). Indeed one could argue that the various theories of adult development do in fact justify this view, as the various stages are passed through – each at a pre-appointed stage, each providing greater freedom to grow and thus leading to a greater 'self'. The Japanese students in Australia therefore owe it to themselves to succeed. But there is also *giri* owed to the teachers who have guided the young people through their education. It may not be possible to repay the debt in the lifetime of the teacher, in which case the debt can be repaid to a younger member of the teacher's family (Benedict 1967, p71). Received 'favours' that have produced or created the young person are being called in and being compounded by the resulting apparent *on* 'received', in the student's eyes in Australia.

***Giri* in education**

Until recently, in Japan all junior high school students had to wear their school uniform at the weekend thus identifying the school which they attended. This is still the case in some schools. In a Japanese school, each student's responsibility to that school's image, to other people in society, to their class mates and to their parents is quite clear, and as is their responsibility to uphold the good name of the school (White 1987, p72). This is one of the obligations undertaken by all students since it is their collective responsibility, reinforcing the dependence they had upon each other and also their loyalty to the institution. This collective responsibility commences in kindergarten, from the first *kumi* (class) that the child is placed into as has been discussed. Duke (1986, p35) suggests that the *kumi* is the commencement of group identity training, and starts on day one of year one of the educational ladder.

Within that group identity is the concept of taking responsibility through having, an obligation to the school, no matter how young the student. The feeling of obligation to another commences early on in the life of the *kumi* since the larger group, typically 40–45 students, will be broken into smaller *han* (groups) each with a leader for specific educational purposes. Duke points out that again the system is replicating the work environment where work teams function under a

team leader for the ultimate good of the whole (Duke 1986, p35). Not only is the interdependency brought about by *amae*, but also the group members now owe *giri* to their *han* leader.

One other aspect of *on/giri* worthy of consideration is that of the choice of the *naikodo* (go-between) at one's wedding. There is no equivalent in the west to the go-between in terms of the function the position performs. This person is often connected either through educational or employment to one of the couple. The couple will then owe *giri* to their *naikodo*.

Guests at the wedding will almost certainly include professors from the universities attended by the couple, often junior high school or high school teachers, and the current line manager in the workplace of both. Most of these invitations are *giri* invitations, but in fact perpetuate the *on / giri / ninjo* scenario, since the 'underlings' are now indebted to their former teachers and are expected to '*demonstrate respect and loyalty*' (Reischauer 1977, p164).

It is also worth considering the concept of '*giri kekkon*' or 'obligatory marriage'. This is not concerned with an out of wedlock pregnancy, as may be the case in other societies, but with a marriage arranged by two families for the betterment of the strategic relationship that exists between them, often through business.

Ezrati (1999, p184) cites former Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro who illustrated this point quite succinctly in a 1986 speech where the then Prime Minister referred to the Western principles of individualism as '*coming from the 'desert culture' of the Middle East*'. In Judeo-Christianity Nakasone maintained, '*individuals are like hard separate grains of sand*'. Japanese, Nakasone went on, come from what he termed a '*monsoon culture*' since they stick together like the glutinous rice so common in the Japanese diet.

The language of *amae* and *giri*

In a society where everyone is depended on and dependent upon somebody and, where everybody both owes and is owed '*giri*', it is hardly surprising that differing language forms exist to place people within the hierarchy of society. In Japanese society this is known as *keigo*. *Keigo* is thought to have been developed from the special language employed when referring to and communicating with the Imperial Family, who, being descendents of the Gods had to be addressed in a very specific register and in a highly honorific format. The English language also exhibits register, but *keigo* is quite unlike its English language equivalent. Sugawawa (1985) maintains that the use of *keigo* is intricately linked to both the thinking process and social structure of Japanese people (Sugawara 1985, p25). *Keigo* was developed to differentiate

between the different levels of respect – it cemented relationships within a community, rather than discriminating (Sugawara 1985, p26). It also placed individuals within the group or community, and continues to do so.

There are four levels within *keigo* each used according to the social cultural standing of the interlocutors according to Sugawara (1985, p 25):

1 *sonkeigo* the honorific form used to one's superior

2 *kenjogo* used to humble oneself to superior

3 *keibetsugo* the casual language used with intimate friends, or to be slightly disrespectful to 'social inferiors'

4 *teineigo* where the speaker is not comparing self to others or situations but needs a polite means of addressing people in general.

For Japanese students in Australia the level of language to use is unknown, and the degree to which he or she should, could, or must *amaeru* is also unknown. The word *sensei* is used to address a range of individuals, to whom one shows respect. Typically, a doctor, dentist, priest or teacher (male or female) will, in Japan, be addressed as, for example, '*Tanaka sensei*', meaning 'Tanaka teacher'. In a Japanese university, the academic's door will provide the family and then the given the name of the occupant, but not necessarily his or her position, that is Associate Lecturer or Professor. All are *sensei*. In Australia however, the office of an academic staff member will typically provide the occupant's position, and the individual will frequently invite their students to use his or her first name. Thus the student finds communication difficulties that are not just related to simply speaking English, but knowing in their Japanese framework what register to use, how they can interact with whom, and how they should address them. The educational world that the Japanese students now find themselves part of, is not just challenging academically, but also socially. The signposts that in Japan that inform the student of the status or position of the interlocutor, of their lecturer, or of their class mates cannot be found in Australia, and at present it would seem that the student must navigate this alone.

Specific nature and focus of this research

This review of literature has analyzed the different reasons why students may choose Australia as a study destination, with particular reference to Japanese students. It has demonstrated the importance of full fee paying international students, and specifically Japanese students, to Australia, while showing that the Japanese culture certainly has distinctive values and views of

learning that potentially affect expectations, and which are different to prevailing Australian academic practices and values. This review has specifically detailed cultural differences in approaches to learning, the role of university education, and the experiences likely to be engaged at university in Japan. In the last sections of the literature review, descriptions and analyses of the importance of Japanese values have been presented, and their relationship to learning experiences, likely to form expectations transferred to a host country, have been outlined.

Given the contribution that international students make to the Australian economy in terms of the full fees that they pay, especially the Japanese in relation to this particular study, it is argued strongly that they are entitled to services underpinned by university policies that recognize the special needs that they have in transferring into different cultural settings. These students also are trying to achieve success with different culturally determined learning demands using English, which is unlikely to be their first language. The continued success of the current approaches to attracting international students to Australia, in an environment of increasing competition from other education service providers, especially the UK and USA, will require more than the current marketisation model. Recently Fallon (2008) has highlighted the need for understanding the cultural background and learning needs of international students in Australia in order to support them better.

Despite needs analysis research being regarded as one of the most basic and important forms of research when preparing courses for students with particular needs (see Owen & Rogers 1999), no research could be located that specifically examined the learning needs and expectations of Japanese international students at Australian universities. Nor should it be said, has been possible to locate such research in USA or UK settings. This research seeks to rectify this, by undertaking empirical research with a view to influencing university policies regarding appropriate steps to help Japanese students. An existing literature stemming from the concern of those directly providing academic and support services to Asian international students and Owens' (2005) research, most directly related to this study, reveals a degree of frustration and incredulity at the failures of university administrations to ensure proper provision of helping services. It has to be said that this literature lacks a substantial, empirical needs analysis basis, derived from direct questioning of students, which would make it more difficult for university management, bureaucrats and governments intent on fostering the marketisation model to ignore.

The information that it is considered important to obtain in this research as a basis for policy recommendations is considered to fall into three distinct groupings, with these in fact forming a model for the undertaking of this research. It is considered that these form a potentially generic

model for similar research into the needs and expectations of other distinct cultural groups who seek to enroll in Australian universities, when there is good reason to believe that their cultural experiences of learning in their home culture may differ significantly from the demands made in the Australian cultural setting, and inhibit more effective learning in Australia. However, given the lack of previous, relevant, studies to help underpin this research, it must be regarded as exploratory and a foundation for later, more extensive research efforts in an important area.

The three categories of information to be sought in this research are 'About You', 'You in Australia' and 'You in Japan'. The rationale underlying these groupings is that 'About You' will provide important background information about individuals and experiences of individuals prior to their enrolment in Australia. It also hopefully should provide understanding of the decision-making that occurred before and after the decision is made to seek enrolment at an Australian university. This will include information about the student's age, position in the family, whether other family members had studied overseas, where the student had undertaken high school and English language studies prior to the commencement of their tertiary program, along with discipline and level of study at an Australian university. As well as providing important information on the amount of time English has been studied, and where this study had taken place, such data can potentially identify socio-cultural changes in Japanese society and the continuance of traditional support of the eldest child in the Japanese family. Other questions in 'About You' relate to any experiences the students may have had on a university campus in Japan, and how they feel their Australian campus may compare, thus highlighting any differences in expectations and identifying the sources of these.

'You in Australia' will feature explicit questions on the Japanese respondents' educational and socio-cultural experiences in Australia. There will also be questions on with whose idea it was to study in Australia, and how they see themselves as individuals in Japan both socially and within the Australian educational system. Questions asking how much, and what types of research in preparation for study in Australia was done, will allow assessment of the adequacy of the preparation for study in the Australian setting. Questions will also be asked on the way that they perceived their overseas stay, both from their own and their parents' perspective. There is good reason to consider perceived parental support as parents are likely to be quite critical in providing the economic means for the international study sojourn. From this data, as with that in other sections, it will be possible to assess the gaps between expectations and actual learning needs in the Australian university setting.

The third section 'You in Japan' contains questions aimed at determining the types of activities that individuals engaged in while in Japan and the types of expectations that that may have been formed regarding their Australian study experiences. Questions in this section cover, not only educational issues, but also socio-cultural aspects possibly revealing how they expected to spend their non-study time in Australia. Together these three sections are designed to provide the data to make judgments about the nature and source of the expectations that the Japanese students brought with them, their preparation for their study in Australia, and the real needs that emerge as usually a gap between their expectations and what they experience when actively engaged in study at an Australian university.

Understanding of Japanese socio-cultural values, operating as mores, codes of conduct and values pertaining to interpersonal relationships and expectations attached to these, derived from the review of literature above, substantially underpin many of the questions relating to expectations. The potential problems for Japanese students studying in the Australian university culture, that have been identified from the relevant literatures reviewed, also have contributed substantially to development of specific questions in each of the three sections. A full listing of the questions asked, and the rationales for asking each question, are presented in the following chapter, Chapter 3 Methods and Procedures.

CHAPTER THREE METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research perspective and the position adopted for conducting this research

The primary intent of this research was to explore the learning needs and expectations held by Japanese international students studying in Australia at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Since the literature indicates that the first six months is the most difficult period of adjustment, and also the period in which most culture shock is experienced (see Choi 1997; Gundykunst 2003; Kim 1988), it was planned that the data relating to Japanese students' learning needs and expectations be gathered as soon as possible, effectively in the first semester of their enrolment in their university course. Information gathered in this period is more likely to reflect accurately their learning needs and expectations, than at a later period, when adaptation has taken place, and many of the more challenging situations possibly forgotten or clouded by layers of different memories.

Since no previous, directly relevant research had been located to build upon, and thus guide this study by indicating the possible nature of the findings, it was decided that it was necessary to establish a factual knowledge base that was essentially empirical and quantitative. In the light of a range of factors, especially the cultural and social values of the intended respondents and their linguistic skills in English (see below), it was decided to use a questionnaire to collect quantitative and some qualitative data, with a follow-up interview to obtain more qualitative data. In fact the initial findings were somewhat surprising in that these revealed that the motivations for study in Australia were not mainly related to obtaining a specific qualification relating to future employment but of a more self-developmental nature. At this point it was decided that the interview would be important to additionally check the validity and reliability of the more unexpected questionnaire findings.

McIntyre (1995, pp121-133) reminds us of the need for approaches to research in adult education and training to be explicit. Clear identification of research perspectives adopted as outlined above is important in an era of multiple paradigms, and interpretive perspectives. The approach adopted in this research is primarily empirical-analytical in nature (see Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992), given the need to establish a sound factual knowledge basis as foundations for university policy recommendations. Empirical-analytical research uses factual, quantitative data as the basis for making judgments and drawing conclusions, and involves questions of reliability and validity (Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992; Scott 1996; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994).

Quantitative data can be collected from subjects in a range of ways, examples being focus groups, face to face interviews, telephone interviews, auditing classes and the employment of ethnographic methods as well as use of questionnaires. The decision to employ an anonymous questionnaire as the primary data collection method was made after consideration had been given to, not only the most culturally appropriate method of obtaining the required data (see below), but also the method that would potentially provide the most information, with the greatest degree of reliability and validity (Scott 1996, p55; Cohen & Manion 1994, p282).

One-to-one interviews were also a possibility as a primary method of data gathering, but considerations of trying to obtain data from a reasonably large number of subjects needed be balanced against the considerations of time and costs (Gay 1992; Cohen & Manion 1994), and, in this study involving Japanese students, the issue of being likely to gain more honest and direct information through an anonymous questionnaire that respondents could take time answering. One-to-one interviews and the obtaining more qualitative data were seen as a smaller scale, supplementary approach to balance the strengths of the questionnaire concerning quantitative data. This research thus was framed chiefly in an empirical-analytical perspective, whilst remaining cognizant of the need also for socio-cultural and historical analysis, with quantitative methods employed to gather basic data since little research has been carried out on this specific cultural group in Australia. In effect the research employed quantitative and qualitative approaches, or a complementary, mixed methods approach that is currently recognized as good research practice (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004).

Scott (1996, p74) indicates that the empirical research method cannot be divorced from social theory, and points out that how we understand the social world will determine not only 'how' we know it, but also how we collect data about it. Further, Usher (1996, p10) comments that within empirical research, data alone is insufficient – it is the explanation behind the phenomena, the response to the question 'why is this happening' that is important. Questionnaires allow the collection of quantitative and qualitative data through the use of Likert scales and closed and open-ended response possibilities (Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992; Scott 1996; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994). The interplay between the quantitative data, in terms of how many students thought or felt in a certain way, and the qualitative data, exploring why the participants thought and felt the way they did, while explored in the questionnaire, was the subject of further exploration through the interview process where qualitative approaches were used with follow-up interviews using a semi-structured approach aiming to respond to Usher's question 'why' (Usher 1996, p10). The combination of data gathering combined with a methodological approach

that facilitates interpretation therefore meets Usher's requirement to provide scientific results (Usher 1996, p12).

Of equal importance in this study however, are cultural issues which affect methods where the focus of the research is a specific cultural group, with intended respondents being Japanese and thus from a non-English speaking background. These factors can have a profound effect upon the methods and procedures adopted and the issues relating to method choice and socio-cultural considerations are now considered.

Cultural and linguistic issues considered in selection of research methods

There were several constraints operating in this research study involving cultural issues as well as ethics approval that basically required confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Essentially any group data gathering method, either discussion or focus group, appeared to be unsuitable when the concern was the collection of data that was likely to reveal a wide range of individual differences, often quite personal in nature. Additionally a set of cultural issues, preventing the use of a group method, is the social structures and values that operate in Japanese society in group situations. These are now outlined to support the use of an anonymous questionnaire in English as the most valid and reliable means of empirical data collection.

Japanese people are frequently perceived as being more comfortable in a 'group setting'. Consequently there is a strong tendency for uniform behaviour to be displayed in such a social setting; this relates directly to the concept of *amae*, as discussed in Chapter 2, where each is dependent upon the group as a whole, with the security provided by the group ensuring that each member feels comfortable. Japan's hierarchical framework, ensures that small children are made aware of their own ages and those of other children in their social world thus, from childhood are able to place 'self' and 'other'. The older child gives in to the younger, the one who is 'too young to understand'. From an early age therefore, the importance of seniority through age and one's place in the hierarchy, is established (Hendry 2003, p51). Even if discussion in focus groups had been an option, which they weren't given ethics issues regarding anonymity and confidentiality across two universities, it is highly unlikely that the students would have participated, since they represented a wide range of programs at two universities, and as such, were not necessarily known to each other. Should the students have 'participated', it is highly unlikely that they would have contributed honestly and openly, due to the difficulty of placing 'self' within the unknown group, which would have involved a range of unknown socio-cultural and linguistic levels.

If each student had been interviewed, either individually, or as part of a focus group working through the points raised in the questionnaire (see Appendix A), the student would have had to converse in the English language with a native speaker (see below on choice of English), in the latter scenario in front of other Japanese students. Expressing an opinion in the public arena is not something that is encouraged in Japanese culture, and has been referred to by Reischauer and Jansen (1995, p159) as the '*clash between personal self expression and social conformity*'. Since the questionnaire was to be completed as soon as possible after enrolment, the potential for students to still feel insecure and uncomfortable using English, particularly in a one-to-one interview or group situation, was an important factor that could not be ignored. Furthermore there would have been the potential for the student to provide the response that either they thought the researcher wanted, or a statement to save face in front of others, an important Japanese socio-cultural consideration, rather than their candid personal view or response. Therefore no matter how enthusiastic as individuals they may have felt, to have been placed in such a situation would potentially have been setting the students, and this research, up for failure. This aspect of the Japanese student's 'community world' in Japan vs. their more individual world in Australia, combined with the social hierarchical system in place, were therefore important factors to be cognizant of when considering the collection of data.

Needed in this research were truly candid, carefully considered answers by individuals within an overall research perspective awareness that there would be a range of quite distinctly different answers on account of individual differences. Such individuality in answers was likely to be compromised by any group process. Furthermore, due to the confidentiality aspect of this research stipulated by the Ethics Committee of one of the participating institutions, group-based discussion was not an available option

Although Goldstein (1995) recommends conducting interviews in a subject's own language whenever possible with sensitivity to social values and issues, conducting the research in the Japanese language was ruled out for socio-cultural, linguistic and economic reasons, as well as associated problems with reliability and validity with translation and re-translation. Each participating student had attained a level of English permitting entry to their enrolling university, thus had demonstrated a given level of competence in the English language. This created a distinctly different situation to that of Goldstein's research (1995) where many of her Portuguese worker subjects in Canada spoke English very poorly or not at all. Goldstein in her ethnographic research also appears to have ignored, or been ignorant of, the validity and reliability problems (see Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994) in translation and re-translation, and her use of a mainland, university educated Portuguese speaker, with limited

experience of Azorean culture, as a translator with Azorean Portuguese workers of a different sub-culture. The researcher, whilst not fluently bilingual, does have a level of competence in Japanese and her knowledge of Japanese culture, developed through nearly a decade of residence in Japan, allowed her to establish culturally appropriate and sensitive procedures in accordance with Goldstein's (1995) intent, both in the questionnaire and the subsequent individual interviews.

Both the questionnaire and the follow-up interviews used English as the working language. This decision was based upon specific knowledge of Japanese language and a concern that, if Japanese had been the working language, the students may not have felt as free to make the comments that they did, due in part to the structure and register of the Japanese language. As commented upon in Chapter 2 literature review, in Japan, the relationship between the interlocutors dictates the level of language used which, due to socio-cultural concerns, may have prevented the students from responding objectively and honestly. That is to say respondents are more likely to be socially polite and provide the answer that they think will satisfy the superior/interviewer. Moreover, the English language is perceived by some Japanese as being 'easier' to provide an honest response in, due to the greater clarity of the language, and without the social norms ever present in the Japanese language (McMahil 1997, p617).

Should the discussion have been carried out in the Japanese language, the potential for the students to function in a Japanese scenario as outlined above, could not be ignored. In addition, there would have been problems of reliability and validity created by translation of questions from English into Japanese and then answers from Japanese into English. The costs involved in such procedures would have been substantial and were simply not practical. In effect the approach adopted in this research closely paralleled the successful study by Purdie and Hattie (1996), itself reflecting findings by Ervin-Tripp (1967) that people respond differently relating to the language that is used. Given the English language levels required for admission to university in Australia it was judged that appropriate, valid and reliable data could be obtained by use of English with due consideration of Japanese cultural sensitivities (see Goldstein 1995).

Questionnaire administration took into account the possibility of some language problems. In accordance with procedures required by the two ethics committees at the two universities, the questionnaire was addressed to the homes of individual Japanese students by the university international offices, allowing the participants to respond to the questions in their own time, without feeling that they had been 'put on the spot' as could potentially have been the case in a group discussion and particularly in an individual interview format. By employing an

anonymous questionnaire to be completed at home, the students would not be placed in a situation where 'face' may be lost. Furthermore, they were able to take their time and consult a dictionary or friends for assistance if necessary.

Ethics approval constraints

Ethics approvals from the two participating universities created certain constraints for the research. Understandably confidentiality was an important issue and direct access to students was possible only through international student offices. This meant that the researcher was unable to check to ensure that only beginning students were included, among other things. Evidence from a few questionnaires indicated that at least one exchange student and a couple of continuing students were included in the direct mail-out of the questionnaire. Ensuring that the questionnaires reached all incoming Japanese students at the participating institutions was hindered by some students having not yet registered their home address with their enrolling university. In addition, the ability to identify students from target countries can be problematic due to institutional administrative systems. One of the participating institutions, for example, changed its administrative systems during the mail out period and may not have captured all data required to identify each member of the target group.

Control by the international student offices also created problems in having to do multiple mail-outs to all students as a reminder to complete the questionnaires, although this also reflected the issues of maintenance of genuine anonymity. For understandable reasons, the confidentiality requirement stipulated by the Ethics Committee of one of the participating institutions meant that auditing classes was not a viable option. This is due to the multicultural Australian educational setting where the students, placed in ethnically mixed classes, would have had to identify themselves as Japanese, thus breaching the confidentiality requirement regarding the student's name and institution.

Had auditing classes been an option however, issues to do with 'face' would, as argued previously, once more have potentially discouraged student participation. Furthermore, again due to the confidentiality requirement, neither small focus groups nor a larger group discussion were realistic options to the researcher and, as commented upon above, open discussion of this nature is not typically Japanese.

There were judicious reasons for the restrictions relating to anonymity. The protection of student privacy is both a moral and legal issue and particularly important when the students are recently arrived in a new country and thus unaware of their rights. Given therefore both the socio-cultural

and ethics related issues commented upon, the primary data source in this research therefore was a voluntary anonymous questionnaire, with a further, voluntary follow-up interview.

Student population and sample

As indicated in Chapter 2, the Japanese student cohort at the tertiary level is a relatively small but important one which contributes a not insignificant financial figure to their accepting institution, and their local community. There were 4,113 Japanese students studying at the tertiary level in Australia in 2003 (Australian Education International 2003), the year that the research was carried out. The 178 Japanese students who were invited to participate in this study, were enrolled in two participating universities in Sydney in Semester 1, 2003, and, irrespective of the level of their program, were in their first year of study. First year, first semester students were the focus of the study since, being at the commencement of their studies, they would be potentially more acutely aware of the differences between the Japanese and Australian tertiary education systems (see Choi 1997; Gundykunst 2003; Kim 1988). There were 51 respondents to the questionnaire, out of 178 giving a response rate of 28.6%. (For a fuller discussion of the response rate and factors in response interpretation see below.)

Level of study and specialty areas

Of the 51 respondents, some students indicated more than one area of study with sixteen students (28.6%) indicating that they were majoring in Education and/or Teaching. Nine students (16.1%) listed Business related studies as their major, seven students (12.5%) were from Medicine and Health, with Information Technology and Science attracting 5 students each (8.9%). Law had three enrolments (5.3%). Thus the sample represented a considerable number of tertiary study areas.

Table (v): Japanese respondents by discipline

Discipline	Number	Percentage
Education/Teaching	16	28.6%
Business	9	16.1%
Medicine / Health	7	12.5%
Information technology	5	8.9%
Science	5	8.9%
Law	3	5.3%

Of the fifty-one respondents to the questionnaire, sixteen students indicated that they were studying at the undergraduate level, one at the postgraduate certificate level, fourteen students at the postgraduate diploma level, thirteen at the masters level and four at the doctoral level. Thus those who responded to the questionnaire also covered a number of different levels and qualifications. One student studying at the undergraduate level, self identified as an exchange student, that is a non-award student in Australia for either a single semester or a full academic year, from a Japanese university with whom the Australian university has a reciprocal exchange agreement.

Developing the questionnaire

Cohen and Manion (1994, p92), among many other authors of research methods texts, indicate that: *'the ideal questionnaire...is clear, unambiguous and uniformly workable. Its design must minimize potential errors from respondents...and coders. And since people's participation in surveys is voluntary, a questionnaire has to help in engaging their interest, encouraging their cooperation, and eliciting answers as close as possible to the truth'*.

The questionnaire itself therefore had to be easy to follow and to make students want to participate. This highlighted the need for serious consideration to be given to the level of English to be employed. This was further accentuated by the fact that, the 'true levels' of English comprehension were unknown, despite all participating students having met the required level of language competency for their enrolling institution. Typically this is documented through the result of a recognized English Language test, the two main tests used in Australia being IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). In general an IELTS score of 6.5, or a TOEFL score of at least 570 depending upon the institution and program, is acceptable. Students were not asked to provide information regarding the test that they had undertaken, nor the result of that test. Most universities also have, usually as part of their English Language Centre, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses that permit 'direct entry' to academic study after a pre-prescribed number of weeks of study have been undertaken, and a pre-determined level of competency, typically a level deemed to be equal to the stated IELTS or TOEFL score, has been attained. Some institutions accept the results of similar programs in respected language centers at other universities.

Question types

Most research methods texts stress the need for questions to be written in a clear and concise way in order to maximise comprehension and encourage participation in accordance with recommendations for design of good questionnaires (eg Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992;

Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994). These texts also highlight the advantages and disadvantages of open and closed questions in questionnaire design and the need for a mix of both question types.

Merriam and Simpson (1995) point out that closed questions allow for the guiding of participants along specific lines, whereas the more open-ended questions are able to elicit ‘unanticipated’ responses, allowing for the collection of more qualitative data. Closed questions also tend to allow for the creation of a shorter questionnaire that can be more reliably scored. A shorter questionnaire, furthermore, is potentially more likely to be completed than one which when initially received by the subject appears long and time consuming. The questionnaire used in this research therefore contained a range of question types, including both closed and open-ended questions, and which aimed to ascertain the students genuine thoughts regarding the educational experiences that they had undertaken in Japan, and those that they were about to undertake in Australia.

Most of the questions in ‘Section One’ of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) were closed questions seeking demographic data and were used where the students were asked to respond to a statement by circling ‘Y’ for yes or ‘N’ for no. The language used avoided complex structures. The question could relate to a factual statement e.g., Have you been onto a university campus in Japan?, or to the students position regarding a given statement, for example accepting or rejecting an statement regarding how they had viewed themselves in Japan from a range of personality types. Further examples of closed questions used in the questionnaire included those questions where, from a range of given responses using a Likert scale, the students were asked to respond with a tick ‘√’ to the comment that most represented their personal situation, feelings or views. Students were advised that in some situations it was acceptable or necessary to tick more than one response.

Merriam and Simpson (1995, p144-145) point out that, while closed questions force the participant to select from alternatives provided by the researcher, responses to open ended questions may provide a broader range of responses and can be less threatening to participants. Open ended questions in this research asked the students to explain why they thought or felt a certain way about something, and required a textual response. Some questions stipulated the number of responses required; in others students were advised that it was acceptable to provide more than one response. For example, in some cases students were asked to provide three reasons why they thought a particular phenomenon was the case. Cohen and Manion (1994,

p277) comment that open-ended questions add flexible and can provide for unexpected or unanticipated responses.

Trialing the questionnaire

After formulation of a range of questions (see below), the questionnaire was trialed in Semester 2, 2002, with a small mid-year intake (5 students) at one of the participating universities, the second institution not offering mid-year entry. Detailed analysis of these responses resulted in some minor language modifications based upon the participants' apparent understanding, or lack thereof, regarding some specific questions, and revealed the need to group the questions into the subsequent three major sections indicated here, for greater logical clarity and ease of response.

Sections of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed to explore three broad categories: 'About You', 'You in Australia' and 'You in Japan'. The final version of the questionnaire used in this research is to be found in Appendix A. The following section briefly elaborates on each of these three areas before exploring the rationale(s) for each question in the questionnaire.

1) About You

The first section primarily explored demographic data, relating for example, to the students position in their family, where the student had undertaken both their high school studies and also English language training prior to commencing their tertiary program, and the incidence of siblings or other family members having studied overseas. Participants were also asked their discipline, and level of study.

The questions in this section were designed to commence the exploration of 'who' the students coming to Australia are, and thus questions were typically closed questions providing statistical data. Such data can potentially identify socio-cultural changes in Japanese society relating to the continuance of traditional support of the eldest child in the family, and highlight the source of potential influences and expectations brought to Australia. Further questions explored any experiences the students may have had on a university campus in Japan and how they felt that their Australian campus might compare.

2) You in Australia

In this section, students were asked for example, whose idea it had been that they study overseas, and, by choosing from a range of given responses, to comment upon how they had seen

themselves as individuals in Japan, both socially, and within the educational system. Questions also covered both educational and socio-cultural aspects of the Australian sojourn and asked the students to explore some aspects of their overseas stay, from both their own and their parents' perspective. The parents' perspective is of relevance since, while students were not asked who was funding their studies, anecdotal evidence suggests that in most cases it is their parents or other family members. Evidence therefore of such parental support for the sojourn is important.

3) You in Japan

The third section asked the students how, through looking back at the way in which they had seen themselves as a student in Japan, they now saw themselves as students in Australia. This covered not only educational issues, but also socio-cultural aspects such as who they had spent their free time with in Japan, and how that time had been spent, leading to who they expected to socialize with in Australia, and again how they expected to spend their non-study time.

Specific questions and the rationale for their inclusion in the questionnaire

Section 1: About You

Question 1

Students were asked where they were placed in their family, from a range of given statements: the only child, or the youngest, middle or eldest child, in the family. Students were also asked if any member of their family had studied overseas. If responses were positive then they were asked who the individual had been, and where they had studied. Participating students were also asked the level of program that they were enrolling in, and their area of study.

All sections in Question 1 were designed to provide quantitative data to commence the exploration of who the students coming to Australia are. Traditionally in Japan's vertical society the eldest child, particularly the male child has been the favoured offspring. Data regarding the student's position in the family therefore is significant, since should the results indicate that other siblings are also undertaking overseas study, this could suggest socio-cultural changes in Japan. Students were not asked who was supporting them financially, as this was considered too personally intrusive and culturally insensitive, but, as commented upon, anecdotal evidence suggests that in many cases this is the students' parents.

Questions exploring how many participants had siblings or other family members who had studied overseas attempted to identify potential influences upon the participants in terms of the

destination of their own overseas study sojourn. Although students were asked which country the family member had studied in, thus exploring the possibility of influence, they were not asked the field of study. The role of family members in the decision making process, and the possible 'study scenario' provided to the student by a sibling or relative who had studied overseas, both have the potential to inform the student's expectations of the educational process.

Question 2

The question focused upon where the student's education to date, and specifically where their high school and/or university level education had occurred. If this had not been in Japan, students were asked where they had undertaken their studies. The question further asked the students if they had completed a Foundation Studies program in Australia since a student having undertaken high school and/or Foundation Studies here, could potentially have a greater understanding of the Australian tertiary sector through for example, having audited lectures as part of their program/s. This could have had created the potential for the student's expectations of tertiary studies to have been influenced or informed by this experience, and thus such students may hold different expectations of, and be better prepared for, their subsequent tertiary studies. One of the participating institutions did require Japanese students to undertake Foundation Studies, prior to commencing their tertiary program.

Students who had undertaken language training in the English Language Centre belonging to, or associated with, their university of subsequent enrolment may also have been provided with the opportunity to audit lectures as part of language training. Such students may also be potentially better equipped to undertake tertiary studies in Australia through having more realistic expectations of the process. Such data is therefore important to receiving institutions. More importantly, and partially linked to commercial considerations, with this knowledge institutions are in a better position to prepare those students studying English in their language centre for tertiary level studies. This is particularly pertinent where the institution 'guarantees' entry into an academic program at the attainment of a predetermined level of English.

Question 3

Following on from responses to question two, question three explored how well the students themselves felt that their previous educational experiences had prepared them for tertiary studies in Australia from 'very well', to 'not at all'. This question was the first to elicit comments regarding the student's expectations based upon previous learning experiences.

Question 4

The expression of ideas, or of data, and the learning process itself is dependent upon the student's ability to communicate in the English language thus it was important to explore where language training had occurred and how long the students had studied for. All participating students had achieved the required standard of English to enter their chosen institution. However, those who had prepared in Japan would almost certainly have not had the same opportunities to use the English language in an academic environment as those who studied in Australia may have had. Students were therefore asked in which country, Japan, Australia, or elsewhere, they had studied English in preparation for this program, and explored from a range of given institution types, the type of institution where the tuition had taken place, eg a private language school, the language school belonging to their university of enrolment, that of a competitor institution, or elsewhere. The question then asked how long the student had spent studying English for their university program.

Such information has the potential to inform Australian universities regarding the implications associated with students having undertaken all their language training in Japan. There is also the potential that those students who have attained the required level in their home country for example, may have never received tuition from a qualified native speaker teacher of English, although due to the number of native speakers teaching English in Japan, including Australians, this is unlikely.

The amount of time spent on English language training and the type of institution where this is occurred is important, since it has the potential to inform the institution how successful their own English Language Centre is in attracting language students who may subsequently become tertiary level students. Such data may also document how many of their language students are undertaking language training to meet the requirements of a 'competitor university'.

Question 5

The question asked students if they had been onto a university campus in Japan, and whether or not they had audited a lecture. The question provided further background information for developing the profile of the students, since the expectations of those who had not visited a campus in Japan could potentially be somewhat different to those of a student who had. This is particularly the case where a lecture may have been audited, thus framing the student's understanding of both what a lecture is, and what the role of the student is in such a learning

environment. In any case Japanese and Australian universities are quite different culturally and have differing expectations, (see Chapter 2, Review of Literature).

Question 6

Following on from question five, the students were asked to comment upon what they had expected their Australian university campus to be like from a range of statements relating to physical similarities and/or differences when compared to a Japanese campus. Respondents were also given two further options relating to, not just the structural aspects of the campus, but also whether the Australian campus looked the same but felt different, or felt the same whilst looking different to a campus in Japan. Students were then asked to explain why they had answered in that way.

Question six was designed to further explore students' expectations of a university campus in Australia. The aspect of atmosphere, of somewhere 'feeling right' is an issue to consider with Japanese students, since as is discussed in Chapter 2, the Literature Review, the motivation for attending university in Japan is not typically based upon academic outcomes – but rather somewhere to relax prior to entering the work force (see Metraux 2001; McVeigh 2002). Question 6 also prepared the way for the first question in Section 2.

Section 2: You in Australia

Question 7

This question explored whether or not the student had visited a university campus in Australia prior to enrolment, and if so, whether they had sat in on a lecture. Those who had audited a lecture were asked from a range of given statements, to comment upon which statement/s most accurately reflected the way they had felt about the lecture. Students were able to tick more than one statement from it being just what they had expected, it being very difficult to understand because it was in specialized English, through to it being very easy to follow, thus the student was not worried. Two final statements however were from the more difficult perspective, i.e., 'it was nothing like I had expected, many people were listening carefully and taking notes, it made me feel concerned', with finally, 'I could not understand anything'.

The question asked the students neither the discipline of the observed lecture, nor the student's purpose for the audit. However, irrespective of the discipline, it was the format and academic environment surrounding the lecture that was of importance. This experience could potentially have been the student's initial introduction to academic teaching in Australia and, importantly,

their own self assessment of their linguistic understanding was sought. The question further explored why, if the student had not audited a lecture, they had been to the campus prior to enrolling, and was designed to explore student familiarity with an Australian university campus, including the range of facilities that are, and are not obtainable. This potentially allows the student to ascertain prior to commencement, what facilities and potentially support, might be available to meet their needs even though issues related to 'face' may prevent usage.

Question 8

Question 8 asked whether or not the student had spoken to other Japanese students who had been to, or were at university in Australia, and what they had told the student about their experiences here. Students were given a range of responses from whether or not what they were told had scared them, or had not worried them at all. Students were further asked if they had spoken in Australia or Japan.

The question additionally covered a range of extremely important issues relating to the experiences of other Japanese students who were, or had studied in Australia. The comments made by such individuals have the potential to significantly influence the students and their decision to study here. The reasons for this are related to Japanese cultural norms where the younger person (*kohai*) seeks advice from an older or more experienced individual (*senpai*). The comments made provide further clarification regarding the thoughts and feelings of students who have studied in Australia and thus can provide valuable feedback to institutions. The questions also lead into Question 9.

Question 9

The question focused upon whose idea it had been that the student study overseas. Students were provided with a choice of responses from their own, a family member's (also asking who the family member was), a teacher's or an older friend who had studied overseas. The question further asked how long before coming to Australia the students had decided to study here, and how old they had been when making that decision.

Question 9 covered two important areas. The first part was designed to explore any socio-cultural changes in Japanese society regarding decision making in the family and to explore which family members, or other individuals influential in the young person's life, may have been involved in or influential in the student's decision to both study overseas and more specifically,

study in Australia. Such a role, or possible lack thereof, played by older friends and /or teachers were also regarded as possibly indicative of changes in Japanese society.

The second part of the question relates to the turn around time between making the decision to study overseas, and the subsequent implementation of that decision. Not only is such information important to an institution's marketing staff, but also to educators. This is particularly true in the case of younger students who may necessitate the provision of services hitherto not available, such as mentoring or buddy programs where older students support and guide younger students.

Question 10

The question asked the students to think about the thoughts and feelings that both they and their family had held regarding their coming to Australia. They were asked which were important to them, and also which they thought were of importance to their parent/s. Students were asked to rank a range of thoughts and feelings on a scale of 1 (very important) to 5, (not important at all). Question 10 was a closed question with a range of responses possible covering a wide range of potential issues, social, socio-cultural and educational, which may prevent effective learning from taking place in an Australian academic setting. The question explored the student's view of each potential 'concern', and also asked them to reflect upon how they thought their parents would respond to the same points. Parental views are important due to their potential financial input, and also regarding the permitted 'independence' of their child.

Question 11

The students were asked if they had been to Australia before, and if they had, when and why they had visited previously. This immediately led into the question of why Australia had been chosen as a study destination. The question explored the link between any earlier visits to Australia and the purpose behind them, and the student now being enrolled in an Australian tertiary institution. There is the potential for a young person whose only experience of Australia has been in a holiday environment to enroll into an Australian university with a very limited view if any, of the academic process that they are about to undertake

The question was included in the research to explore links between visits to Australia of a non-academic nature, and the subsequent stated reason for studying here. If large numbers of students visit Australia for reasons related to a tourism based experience, subsequently changing their visa and enrolling in a tertiary level program, institutions need to be aware of this since such a

progression highlights a potential reason for study that may not be related to academic outcomes, and may require a different range of services to be provided.

Question 12

It is important to ascertain where students obtain information regarding overseas study, thus Question 12 was designed to explore the amount of preparation, through reading about university life in Australia, that students had undertaken prior to arrival. This is particularly important in the case of students whose only experience of Australia may have been in a holiday or other non-academic environment.

Question 13

Students were asked how much reading they had done about university life in Australia before they came here with a range of possibilities statements provided, and whether or not it had helped prepare them for university study here. They were asked to explain why it had/had not helped prepare them. Question 13 aimed to ascertain not only the amount of preparation, if any, that students had undertaken prior to arrival, but also to explore what material is/is not available to them in both Australia and Japan.

Section 3: You in Japan

Question 14

The question asked the students to think back to how hard they had studied before they came to Australia, and how they had seen themselves as students, selecting an answer from a range of given statements ranging from being a very good student, to a poor student. They were then asked if they expected to be in the same category in Australia and why this was/not the case. Students were further asked to rank the importance of a range of educational attributes and feelings on a Likert scale of 1 - very important, to 5 - not important at all. Details are to be found in Appendix A.

An important concept in Japanese culture is that of to *gambaru* - to do one's best. Question 14 both explored this concept, and asked the students to consider, not only whether or not they would self-assess into the same category in Australia, but why this would, or would not be the case. The students were also asked who, from a range of individuals, they had received help or support from when in high school, and how they had been helped.

The concept of doing one's best is not necessarily doing one's best just for oneself, but rather doing one's best for the group to which the individual belongs. That group will then do its best for the larger group to which it belongs. Typically the *han* or small classroom based group will *gambaru* for the *kumi*, class group, which will in turn *gambaru* for the reputation of the school as a whole. It was therefore important to ascertain whether or not the students had brought such concepts to Australia with them, since this could demonstrate the expectation of support through Japanese 'groupness' and 'belonging' here in Australia.

Question 14 also explored the traditional support networks available to students in Japan with a view to gaining an understanding of usage, and the form that the support took. For example, these would include support through club activities and through a *zemi* (coming from the English word 'seminar', refer to Chapter 2). Meetings with a *zemi*, also possibly involving group activities either after class or at the weekend, would typically lead to the academic providing support and security. It is important that receiving institutions understand that students coming to Australia with expectations of a similar support network, may find it difficult to access established, but to the students, very different support networks in a changed learning environment, with outcomes that are potentially detrimental to their academic progression.

Question 15

This question considered the attendance at, and potential impact or influence of, attending a *juku* (cram school) in Japan, and if the students thought that this might have helped them prepare for coming to Australia. They were also asked to explain why it might not have assisted. This was followed by further questions pertaining to students who had not been to a cram school exploring whether they thought that their studies here would benefit or suffer as a result, and to explain why they thought this would be the case. Of interest was the exploration of the ways in which *juku*, which in Japan typically assist students with the entrance examination into the next level of education, were perceived as assisting in the subsequent level of learning in Australia.

Question 16

Students were asked who in Japan, from a given list, they had typically spent most of their free time with when not in school/university, and who they expected to spend their free time with in Australia. Students could nominate more than one individual.

The question aimed to explore the student's social networks in Japan and to try and ascertain what the students thought, or expected their social world to be like in Australia. As commented

upon, Japanese people are seen as group-oriented, with that group providing support. The elder/younger (*sempai/kohai*) relationship as previously referred to, is also important in Japan, thus the question looked for evidence of such expectations having been brought to Australia. The question also provided the first reference to the opportunity for socializing with Australian students.

Question 17

This question asked the students to describe themselves from a range of given statements and to consider if their view of themselves would affect their learning in Australia, and how or why this might be the case. The question further asked students to comment upon themselves in terms of how outgoing and participatory they felt that they were, particularly in an academic setting. This led to an exploration of why they had self-assessed in such a way and how this might, or might not, impact upon their effective learning. This is important since it provided an opportunity for students to comment upon what to them, was ‘appropriate’ classroom behaviour likely to lead to effective learning.

Question 18

This question asked the students how easy or difficult they expected a range of aspects of their study to be, from ‘very difficult’ to ‘very easy’. The question considered both the educational skills typically expected of students in the Australian educational environment and socio-cultural study requirements, e.g. group work with the classroom. This section of the questionnaire was heavily influenced by Morley-Warner’s (2000) work on academic literacies. The expectations brought by the Japanese students to the educational world in Australia can potentially be very different to reality in Australia, and thus the question also asked students to comment on ease or difficulty of these study/participation skills, thus revealing their expectations.

Question 19

This question focused on the students’ expectations of their lecturers in terms of the form of both academic and administrative support that they would provide, and how much involvement they would have in the students’ lives

Students were asked about any impact upon their learning if their expectations *were* met, and also how their confidence, studies, and thoughts about Australia might be affected if they were *not* met. The question explored the student’s understanding of student/academic relationships in

Australia, and was designed to explore the expectations brought by the students based upon known socio-cultural norms in the Japanese tertiary sector regarding the relationship between the academic and the student. (This is typified by the *zemi* discussed in Chapter 2, the Literature Review). Evidence of such expectations having been brought to Australia and not being met indicates the potential for a negative impact upon both the student's educational and socio-cultural worlds. Expectations being met however may also impact upon the student's learning in various ways.

Question 20

This question was designed to explore student relationships with non-Japanese students, particularly in terms of the development of potential support networks, and the likely importance to the students of interacting with local students. The question focused upon the possibility that non-Japanese students on campus would initiate a conversation with the Japanese student, and that the Japanese student would initiate a conversation with non-Japanese students, leading to exploring ways in which the student thought that Australians were different to the Japanese.

The question further explored the student's initial thoughts regarding any possible differences between themselves and Australians. The question was designed to ask the students to not only think about what an 'Australian' was – but also what it means to be 'Japanese'.

Question 21

The question looked at how, in Japan, the students had spent their free time, and then asked them to speculate how they would do so in Australia. The question was designed to explore how students expected to spend 'non-study' time in Australia. Wide ranging club activities in a Japanese university frequently provide social networks and it was important to explore what, due to their absence in the Australian university sector, students anticipated would be the source of their free time activities. It was also important to consider how many of the students, due to having experienced the life of a tourist here, envisaged this lifestyle continuing whilst studying.

Question 22

The question asked the students to list three differences between study in Japan and Australia that they thought would be the easiest, and a further three that they thought would be the most difficult, and to explain why. This allowed for an exploration of their concerns and to further explore what they thought were the differences between academic study in Japan and in

Australia. The students were then asked to comment upon whether or not the six points might affect their learning here in Australia, and if so, in what ways.

Integral to this research as is an understanding of the expectations of the Japanese students who come to Australia. This question therefore explored specific aspects of study that the students expected to be either easy or difficult. There is the potential for example, based upon their experiences in Japan, for students expecting specific aspects of their study to be easy to subsequently find themselves in a learning situation where, as a result of an erroneous expectations, effective learning cannot occur.

Question 23

The question asked the students how they planned to deal with any difficulties that they encountered in both their ‘study life’ here, and also in living in Australia. Support networks are important in Japan, particularly ‘the group’ and the idea of consulting a senior for assistance and guidance, as has been referred to by a number of participating students. Question 23 therefore explored how students intended to deal with study-related issues when, or if, their Japanese socio-cultural support networks were not available.

Question 24

As has been commented upon in other chapters, study in Japan, particularly at the tertiary level, is very different to that in Australia. Students were asked therefore what they thought would be the most exciting aspect of their studies in Australia. Overseas study itself for international students may not, as has been discussed elsewhere, be just about success in an academic program, and question 24 was thus designed to highlight what to the students would be the most exciting aspect of their academic experiences here.

Question 25

The question asked who, at the end of the course, would be the happiest and proudest person in Japan, how the student would feel themselves and, if the program took longer than expected, how that would be viewed by the student themselves, their parents and their friends. It then went on to ask who would be the saddest or most disappointed person or people in Japan, if they were not successful, and how they themselves would feel.

As has been commented upon elsewhere, students are typically financially supported by parents or other family members. Question 25 therefore explored issues related to potential failure, and

the impact upon friends and family of this possibility. Keeping 'face' is of great importance thus the importance of success is potentially as important, if not more so, than financial implications associated with failure.

Distribution of the questionnaire and accompanying letter

To ensure anonymity, thus meeting Ethics Committee requirements, data was collected through anonymous questionnaires sent to 178 incoming Japanese students at the commencement of their studies, by the respective International Offices at each of the participating universities, the University of Technology Sydney, and the University of Sydney.

An introductory letter was sent with the questionnaire, explaining the purpose of the research, and an envelope, stamped and addressed to the researcher care of my supervisor, was provided to encourage a response. These aspects followed standard recommended procedures (eg Cohen & Manion, 1994, pp97-98; Merriam & Simpson, 1995, pp144-146). It is important that the subjects of the research understand the purpose of the research, thus encouraging participation. Students were informed therefore in the accompanying letter that by being involved in the research, they were helping Australian universities better understand and meet the needs of Japanese students. Participants were advised that it had been sent to them at the request of the researcher by the international office in their respective institution, and that none of their personal details had been disclosed, that I did not know which program the student was studying in, nor whether they were male or female. Anonymity was stressed by pointing out that they could not be identified from the questionnaire and thus I would not know their name nor contact details. No financial or other inducements were provided.

The researcher's supervisor and another group leader known to the researcher, had access to one large group of students and, while being careful to emphasize anonymity, encouraged participation and the return of the questionnaire. To encourage a higher return rate, a second letter and questionnaire was sent out approximately six weeks after the initial mailing, thanking those who had responded, and encouraging those who had not done so, to now respond. Students were not in either mail-out given a 'deadline' by which the questionnaire had to be returned. Indeed questionnaires continued to be received up to three months after the initial posting.

The questionnaire was designed to be completed by commencing students as soon as possible after enrolment in order to explore their thoughts and expectations regarding the process that they were about to undertake before the educational processes became more familiar to them (see above). Some responses however suggested that a very small number of recipients may not have been commencing students but continuing. As this could not be confirmed one way or the

other, because of the genuine anonymity of the questionnaire, data provided by this small group was included in the statistics. This again is indicative of problems encountered in having to gain access to students through a third party (International Student Office).

Response rate

The questionnaire was sent out twice, and returned by 51 out of the 178 students identified as Japanese international students by the two participating institutions, giving a response rate of 28.6%. Older research literature indicates the need for a high rate of return to reflect the views of the majority. In this study, this may not be as important due to the exploratory nature of the research. Whereas the return rate may be viewed as below expectations, Shaughnessy & Zechmeister (1990, p125) have commented that in research of this type with posted questionnaires, a return rate of 30% is regarded as highly successful. Krause et al (2004), authors of the DEST commissioned *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: Findings from a Decade of National Studies*, found that the response rate to the 2004 study's findings, with data collected through questionnaires involving two mail outs, achieved an effective response rate of 28 per cent. This was considerably lower than the 57 per cent and 37 per cent achieved in 1994 and 1999 respectively using comparable methodologies, reflecting a pattern of lower response that has now become common for questionnaire survey research. These lower levels of response may be attributable to overuse of survey and interview methods by commercial researchers and call centres.

Approximately 10 questionnaires were returned to one of the participating institutions as 'undeliverable' with a further but unknown number being returned to the second institution for similar reasons. Thus, out of the total number of Japanese students enrolled in the two institutions, the response rate was 28.65%. However, this figure increases to 34.26% when the 10 known undeliverable questionnaires are included. While the second institution's non-deliverable number is unknown, there is reason to believe that it also may have been around 10. Should this figure also be included, the response rate would increase further. Reasons for the questionnaires to be undeliverable are potentially related to students having changed address but having not yet advised their institution of this – or by the institution having not yet updated its administrative systems in what is a very busy time of year.

Numbering and handling of questionnaires

Questionnaires were numbered and coded through use of the numbers 1-51 in order of receipt. Comments made by those participating in the semi-structured interview were identified through the use of their 'secret number' from 52 to 102. It was felt that the use of the 'secret number'

which is common in Japan and thus familiar to them would, through anonymity, be an acceptable form of tracking comments.

Interpretation of data

The accuracy of the language employed by the Japanese student respondents was usually sufficient for comprehension, where this was not the case, the response was not incorporated. Spelling errors, in both the trial and main study, often caused by first language interference, i.e. ‘r’ and ‘l’ and frequently the source of pronunciation problems with Japanese, were common and ignored; other responses indicated that the student’s comprehension of the question had been erroneous. Such responses were recorded as ‘further comments’, and not included in the statistical data.

The language chosen by a number of students in their responses on some occasions did require ‘interpretation’ of linguistic issues specific to Japanese students i.e. the positive/ negative nuance of a negative question tag where some Japanese students when working in English, will respond to a negative questions e.g. it isn’t raining is it? (when it is not raining) with a positive response – ‘Yes’ – thus agreeing with the question form rather than the facts as would be the case in native speaker English (Swan 1980, p405). This may also be linked to the difficulty, unlike in the English language, of saying ‘no’ in the Japanese language (Condon 1984, p 11).

Some questions contained four or five parts, each linked together. The logical sequencing of the questions in some cases may not have been understood, manifested by not all sections of the question being responded to. Such a finding, illustrating a discreet but important comprehension issue, may be frustrating for the researcher, but is valuable information for academic staff on understanding of language capability. Generally, where a judgment was made that comprehension was incorrect, responses of this nature were not included as part of a definite category. Other questions required that the students provide an opinion. As commented upon, this is not something that Japanese people respond to with ease. The anonymity of the questionnaire however, did provide a support to those students who responded to questions of this nature.

In reporting the results in following chapters, where the researcher felt that comments made by the students in either the questionnaire or the semi-structured interview required further clarification, or where it was felt necessary to expand upon specific Japanese cultural themes, additional comments are included through the use of square brackets, ie [xxx].

In many questions, students were able to provide multiple responses, or, where opinions were sought, a range of views. Each response from each student was calculated as a discreet response. For this reason, in interpreting findings in the following chapters, where multiple responses were permitted the number of responses may be greater than 51, the total number of respondents. In all cases results were calculated, and are reported, in terms of percentages derived from the number of respondents who actually answered the question. In some cases, because of rounding errors, percentages can total more than 100%.

Initial analyses of data for undergraduate and postgraduates separately across questions revealed no significant differences, hence all results reported in the Results chapter involve combined data from these two subgroups. Summary Tables 26(a-c), reported in the Discussion chapter, and based on results from questions about ease or difficulty of a range of important study/learning skills that have been reported in Tables 18(ai-xv) in Results, have been re-analyzed separately in terms of undergraduate and postgraduate subgroups. These results, which reveal similarities in difficulties encountered, have considerable importance for university policies for these two different groups, and these results need to be spelled out quite explicitly to demonstrate these facts and somewhat unexpected findings, and support the arguments advanced in relation to them.

Reliability check

In order to confirm that the students' responses to the questions were their 'real thoughts', as opposed to what they thought the researcher wanted to read, a number of questions were included in the questionnaire to cross check their responses for reliability. In one case only the responses did not correspond, that is, in only one of out of 51 respondents was the response reliability suspect. This is considered to provide a high degree of confidence in the validity of the findings reported.

In the case of Question 17(a) for example, where the student had to choose Y for 'yes', or N for 'no' regarding the comment that most described themselves, student #12 ticked NO for '*A confident person not afraid to say what they think*'. This was followed by Question 17 (b) asking the students if they thought their view of themselves might affect their learning in Australia. Student 12 responded 'yes'. Question 17(c) then asked students how or why this might be the case. Student #12 responded: '*I hesitate to speak my opinion in group discussion or class. I can't ask my questions in class and I always send email later.*'

Question 18 however asked the students how easy or difficult they expected a range of academic study activities to be from a range of degrees of difficulty. (See Appendix A for further details.)

Student #12's responses maintained that:

'Asking questions in tutorials' was '*not particularly difficult*'

'Talking to your lecturers' was '*not particularly difficult*'

'Developing a relationship with other students' was '*not particularly difficult*'.

Such responses in Question 18 contradicted responses in Question 17.

This could have been the student writing what they thought the researcher wanted to read or the student themselves not wishing to acknowledge or disclose the difficulties that they were experiencing, or trying to save face. Alternatively, it could demonstrate a comprehension or linguistic issue with either one or both of the linked questions thus preventing a reliable conclusion. That the responses of only one student out of 51 displayed variability and (possibly) lack of honesty in answering can be seen as indicting most responses were genuine and consistent, and thus results reported have high levels of reliability (eg see Cohen & Manion 1994; Gay 1992).

Purpose of the semi-structured interview and procedures used

After results from the questionnaire had been analyzed, questions were formulated for the semi-structured interview. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to explore in greater depth the responses to specific questions in the questionnaire and to provide an additional opportunity for the students to comment upon their experiences as international students. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to pursue issues of particular interest to the research with set questions, thus allowing economic use of interview time, while allowance is made for freer comments and additional views of the respondent (Gay 1992; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994, pp126-8).

The questionnaire was followed up with another letter in Semester 2, 2003 inviting all students, whether they had completed the questionnaire or not, to participate in a semi-structured interview. In the case of one of the participating institutions, an email was also sent out to all Japanese students inviting their participation, whether they had completed the questionnaire or not. The second institution was unable to do this due to internal privacy regulations. Students were reminded that due to the anonymity of the questionnaire, the researcher did not know whether or not they had responded. Those that had were thanked; those that had not were reminded that they could still participate in the second part of the research, the interview. Students were advised that they did not have to participate if they did not want to, but the

researcher would be very grateful if they did. They were told that researcher would like to talk to them about the responses that were received to the questionnaire. It was pointed out that, due to anonymity, the researcher did not know which response was theirs, and that they would not be asked to identify their replies. In order to maintain anonymity, students were again given a 'secret number' (a common feature of Japanese security), to quote when they either contacted myself, the researcher, directly on a mobile phone, or contacted my supervisor on his office phone, to make an appointment. No financial or other inducements were provided.

In the interview the researcher adopted culturally appropriate strategies to help put participants at ease (see Goldstein 1995). The students who participated in the interview section were advised at the interview that the researcher had lived in Japan, but not that some Japanese was spoken. As discussed earlier, issues relating to Japanese communication techniques would have potentially impacted negatively upon the discussion had Japanese been the working language. Of much greater importance however, that was the English level of the students was, in the majority of cases, more advanced than the researcher's Japanese, and in all cases proved sufficient for fruitful dialogue to ensue.

Six students responded to and participated in the semi-structured interview process. Five had also completed the questionnaire, one had not. Those participating in the interviews were proportionally to those responding to the questionnaire approximately one in ten. The reasons for the low acceptance of the interview offer are potentially complex, and may not all be related to the research itself but to the end of the academic year. At the time the interviews took place the academic year had just concluded, with students either traveling within Australia, or having already returned to Japan. Furthermore, as has been noted, one participating student was undertaking a postgraduate certificate level program, normally of one semester duration, and the self-identifying exchange student may also have been undertaking a program for one semester only. Thus at least two students from the original cohort would have completed their program at the end of semester one, and probably no longer would have been in Australia. It is also reasonable to assume that some of the returned mail issuing an invitation to participate also belonged to these students, although due to procedures dictated by the universities international office, this cannot be confirmed.

Semi-structured interview: procedures and data recording

For the semi-structured interview, further questions were developed relating to areas where greater exploration was required to confirm or clarify what the students appeared to have been saying (see below). Once more, questions types were both closed and open ended (Cohen &

Manion 1994; Merriam & Simpson, 1995), thus providing an opportunity to explore further particular points of interest to the researcher and also to the student. Students were not shown the questions forming the basis of the interview section of the research. While all students were initially asked the same questions to provide structure and coverage of key research issues, the individual discussions followed different directions according to the interest of the participating student. The interviews allowed for in-depth discussion of specific points, and for the students to raise issues or comment further on points raised that were of their personal interest (see Gay 1992; Shaughnessy & Zeichmeister 1994).

Students were identified using their 'secret number'. This ensured that the comments made were attributed to the correct individual and also maintained anonymity. It was not possible to align each student participating in the interview with the questionnaire that they had submitted on account of genuine anonymity being preserved in accordance with ethics approval requirements. Each participating student's responses were recorded manually by the researcher as they spoke, using a separate chart for each for each question and each participant.

Students were notionally allocated 30 minutes for their interview. However, since the students were able to focus on specific points that were pertinent or of particular interest to them, this time frame was seldom adhered to. Some students used the opportunity to raise issues or concerns of their own, not all of which were pertinent to this research. All interviews were allowed to continue until a natural conclusion occurred; this ranged from fifteen minutes to three hours in duration. Linguistically the students were able to communicate with relative ease, albeit with a wide range of competencies. Where meanings were unclear, clarification was sought from either the interviewee or the researcher.

The results from all the interview questions are reported in Appendix D. These are not reported in their entirety in the Results chapter as in many cases questions in the semi-structured interview were used to support/validate findings obtained in the questionnaire, particularly regarding the more surprising findings. Selected comments from the interviews are used in the following Results and Discussion chapters where they add weight to the interpretation of patterns of results obtained from the questionnaire. They are also used where specific arguments are being advanced when the comments provide additional insights or add extra meaning.

Semi-structured interview/discussion questions

The construction of the questions used in the semi-structured interview was heavily influenced by responses to specific questions in the written questionnaire, particularly where the responses were somewhat unexpected or pointed to socio-cultural changes in Japanese society. Specific

questions used as the basis for discussion in the semi-structured interview, are to be found in Appendix B. Rationales for the questions used in the semi-structured interview follow.

Section One: Initial expectations

This was related to questionnaire Questions 5, 6 and 7. The questions initially focused upon the students initial physical expectations of their Australian campus, and by the student's attitude to and relationship with academic staff. This led to discussion regarding the attitude of academic staff to students, and of students to study in both countries. This was designed to explore how aware participants were of academic expectations in an Australian tertiary environment. Students were asked if what they had found to be the case had met with their expectations, leading to discussion focusing upon any potential impact upon their learning – either positive or negative, and why they thought that this was the case. In some cases students used this latter point to expand upon the difficulties and frustrations that international students face in an Australian university.

Section Two: Information from other students

This was related to questionnaire Question 8. Other students are potentially an important source of information for potential students, thus discussion focused upon any conversations held with Japanese students either in Japan or Australia. The accuracy of that information, in terms of how it may have helped or hindered the students learning through their expectations being influenced by, or framed in a scenario related to what they had been told having been met or not, was explored. Conversely, what the students had not been told by other Japanese students, but subsequently found to be the case was also discussed.

Section Three: The importance of different study attributes and socio-cultural issues

This was related to questionnaire Question 10. Discussion focused on two main areas, these being the importance placed by the students and their parents upon English language ability when studying overseas, typically leading to discussion regarding the parents understanding, and expectations, (if any), of the overseas sojourn. This was an important area of discussion, incorporating potential parental input regarding the sojourn, thus providing further data regarding parental attitudes to their children's international education. The second area, also of importance, was that of the student having someone to turn to in Australia when encountering a problem. The concept of students having such a 'guardian' in Australia was also discussed in terms of the parental attitude to this.

Section Four: The Japanese student as a student in Australia

This was related to questionnaire Question 14. Discussion focused upon how the students had seen themselves as students in Japan and how they now saw themselves in Australia. This is an important issue when considering the persona that the student may have created for themselves in the Japanese educational environment being brought to the very different Australian educational world.

It was also important to consider whether or not the students anticipated being in the same category in Australia as in Japan, as they had placed themselves in the Japanese context in Question 14. The potential exists for this to impact either positively or negatively upon their effective learning in Australia should they not be able to meet their own, self-imposed expectations.

Section Five: Social groupings in Japan and Australia

This was related to questionnaire Question 16. Social groupings in Japan are an integral part of society, thus it was necessary through discussion in this area, to explore if and how students had replicated this in Australia. The focus was on how students had typically spent their free time in Japan, and how they expected to do so in Australia. As commented upon in Chapter 2, Japanese social networks are typically based around ‘the group’, however, since this may not occur in a parallel way in Australia, it was important to explore expectations and actual outcomes.

Section Six: Student’s personality vis-a-vis possible impact upon learning

This was related to questionnaire Question 17. Discussion explored the differences in classroom participation based upon both the expectations of the Japanese and Australian educational systems, and also Japanese socio-cultural norms. The aim was to ascertain how cognizant students were of the very real differences in expectations of participation in an academic setting in Australia, and how the way in which the student had self-identified in the Japanese context, may or may not be a hindrance to effective learning in the Australian context.

Section Seven: The role of the Australian academic

This was related to questionnaire Question 19. Discussion explored the important relationship between student and academic, and focused upon the outcomes, positive or negative, where the students expectations regarding the role to be undertaken by an academic are met or not, in the eyes of the student. The concept of the academic staff member ‘telling’ students ‘how’ and ‘what’ to study was also explored as part of the concept of student autonomy. The difficulty of

talking to lecturers was a further area of discussion, relating to how this may affect the student's learning process if intimidated by talking to an academic staff member.

Section Eight: 'Difficult areas' – what can Australian universities do to help?

The question, not directly linked to any one specific question in the questionnaire, focused upon what students felt was the most difficult aspect of study in Australia for Japanese students, and explored the students' own ideas in terms of what Australian universities could do to assist.

Section Nine: Japanese students' views of Australian students and their family's reaction were they to adopt some of those attributes

This was related to questionnaire Question 20. The question explored the views that the participating students held regarding Australian students, focusing upon and their attitude to both study and life in general. Discussion further considered the reception that Japanese students would receive should they return to Japan having adopted some of the Australian students' attributes, such as the acceptance of individualism and the concept of being viewed, in the Japanese framework, as being 'rude'. Returnee issues are potentially an important consideration for Japanese students overseas. A further question, later in the interview but linked to section 9, explored ways in which the student may have changed whilst in Australia and looked at how the student's parents might view this.

Section Ten: Easy or difficult?

This was related to questionnaire Question 22. Despite their difficulties, many Japanese students commented that study was easier in Australia than in Japan. The question explored why students thought that this was the case, and considered how the students planned to deal with the difficulties that they encountered. The discussion focused on and explored some of the basic differences in the university systems, specifically the students' understanding of the purpose of attending university in Australia and the associated academic expectations. Strategies for dealing with study related difficulties where the student's traditional support networks may not be in place is an important consideration. The discussion therefore explored, not just whether or not strategies had been developed, but what they were, and how successful, or otherwise, they had been.

Section Eleven: The happiest person?

This was related to questionnaire Question 22. Many students suggested that their parents would be the happiest people upon graduation. What therefore would their view be if the students failed

or took longer than was expected to complete the program? How would this also be viewed by friends? Discussion explored how well parents and friends understood the Australian educational system and therefore appreciated the educational experience that the student was undertaking, and the associated difficulties of studying in a language other than one's own. Since, as has been commented upon, the majority of students appear to be funded by parents, it is important to be aware of what understanding parents appear to have of the tertiary system in Australia.

Section Twelve: Japanese cultural signposts

This section focused on the aspects of Japan and Japanese culture that the student missed whilst in Australia and was not related to any question on the initial questionnaire. Cultural signposts such as university opening ceremonies and 'Coming of Age Day' play an important role in Japan, and the question was designed to ascertain what impact there might be on the students' learning without recognizable cultural signposts. Such signposts in Japan might also include visiting shrines or temples with one's classmates at the weekend – further developing the group (see Chapter 2).

Section Thirteen: Advice to students considering study in Australia

The final discussion point explored what advice the students felt that an Australian university should give Japanese students planning to study in Australia. This advice for universities is potentially more important and influential in determining whether Japanese students come to Australia and are successful in attaining a qualification, than promotional material or an institution's representative. These comments are potentially of great importance for institutions, representing Japanese students' feelings and, in effect, evaluations regarding the educational process that they are undertaking, or have completed.

Concluding comment

The data obtained from the questionnaire revealed a number of unexpected issues and expectations. After initial analysis and broad categorization of these issues, it was possible, through the semi-structured interview, to explore further the relevance and impact of these, and the expectations for the receiving institution, the students themselves and, in some cases, their families. Combined results from both methods added depth of understanding to the results from the questionnaire and semi-structured interview as indicated by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004). Results from the questionnaire, which provide important insights into Japanese international students' learning needs and expectations, with additional insights gained from the semi-structured interviews, are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter will report the results derived from the students' responses to the questionnaire, and indicate themes and patterns arising. Both written comments from the questionnaire, and observations made in the semi-structured interview are incorporated, with a view to helping to create a clearer picture of who the students are and what their expectations are. Information, regarding the background knowledge, or lack thereof, that Japanese students have regarding tertiary studies in Australia and the difficulties that they face, is important for the accepting institutions to be able to provide specific services that might be required to improve learning and cultural adjustment.

Unless indicated, the results below follow sequentially numbers of the questions asked. The tables below therefore indicate the question/s asked, the number of individuals responding or not, and the percentages based on the number of responses to the question rather than the number of students involved in the study. In some cases, all students were asked to respond to a lead-in question, with the follow-up questions only applicable to those who had responded in a specific way. Where multiple responses were either required or acceptable, or where the question contained multiple parts thus necessitating further tables, there may be more tables than corresponding to question parts. Not all questions or question parts were applicable to all students, and not all students responded to all questions.

Section One: About You

Background data

The first section in the questionnaire 'About You' focused upon background data, with a view to gaining a clearer understanding of the characteristics of the Japanese students enrolling in the two participating institutions. The position in the family that the student held was felt to be important since this may indicate changes in Japanese society. Question 1(a) explored the student's position in their family with results reported in Table 1(a).

Of the respondents, 43.1% (22) were eldest children and 35.2% (18) were youngest children. The figures in Table 1(a) may suggest a tacit approve for, and/or acceptance of, education in an international environment of both the eldest and youngest child. Support of the former is accepted practice in Japan; evidence of such support for the youngest sibling may indicate the emergence of changes in Japanese social values and a new trend given employment pressures (see Mathews 2004).

Table 1(a): The student's position in their family

Position in family	Number	Percentage
Eldest child	22	43.1
Youngest child	18	35.2
Only child	3	5.8
Middle child	3	5.8
No response	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

With a view to identifying potential influences upon the participants in terms of their overseas study, students were asked in Question 1(b) if family members had studied overseas and, if so, in Question 1 (c), who the person had been, thus highlighting a source of information and possible influence in the decision making process. Table 1(b) indicates how many students had a family member who had studied overseas, with Table 1(c) indicating who the family member had been.

Table 1(b): Students indicating that a family member/s had studied overseas

Response	Number	Percentage
No	37	72.5
Yes	6	11.7
No response	8	15.6
Total	51	100.0

Table 1(c): The family member/s who had studied overseas

Family member	Number	Percentage
Brother	4	66.6
Sister	2	33.3
Total	6	100.0

Results in Table 1(b) indicate that most respondents, 72.5%, did not have family members who had studied overseas. The results in Table 1(c) indicate that only some 6 participants (11.7%),

had siblings or other family members who had studied overseas, thus indicating family members were not a significant source of influence regarding study destination. The data also appears to indicate that sons may be more likely to study overseas than daughters, with 4 of the 6 family members being brothers in a country that is still, as commented upon in the Chapter 2, a male dominated society. However these numbers are small and need to be interpreted with some caution.

Question 1(d) explored the countries where family members had studied. Table 1(d) provides the results which reveal that family members had studied in Australia New Zealand, the USA, Canada and China. The numbers involved however are small, only 2 each studying in Australian and New Zealand, with 1 each in Canada and the USA, thus no significant pattern is revealed.

Table 1(d): Countries where family members had studied

Country	Number	Percentage
Australia	2	28.5
New Zealand	2	28.5
USA	1	14.2
Canada	1	14.2
China	1	14.2
Total	7	100.0

The academic level of the students' study in Australia

Question 1(e) explored the academic level of the students' program of study in Australia.

Results are presented in Table 1(e).

Table 1(e): The level of program that the researched students were enrolled in

Level	Number	Percentage
Postgraduate	33	64.7
Undergraduate	16	31.3
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 1(e) appear to reveal a trend towards postgraduate studies with some 33 students, 64.7% of all respondents, studying at this level, and approximately half this number 16 (31.3%) being undergraduates. Recent DEST data released through Australian Education International (2006-8) confirm a trend generally to more postgraduate enrollments.

The academic disciplines of the researched students are also of interest. A breakdown of this data has already been reported in Chapter 3 in Table (v), in relation to the characteristics of the population surveyed. Only a small number of students participating in this research, some 5 students (9.8%), were undertaking science-based programs. The larger proportion of students in this research were undertaking programs in education and teaching, however the 16 students (31.3%), enrolled in education may be reflective of the programs offered at the two participating institutions rather than being representative of enrollments of Japanese students across all Australian universities. It should be noted that a further 6 students (11.7%) did not indicate their discipline.

The students' prior learning in Japan and elsewhere

Table 2(a): Where the students had undertaken high school studies: Country of study

Country	Number	Percentage
Japan	43	84.3
Australia	3	5.8
New Zealand	1	1.9
USA	1	1.9
Tanzania	1	1.9
India	1	1.9
No response	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Since it was possible that some of the participating Japanese students had undertaken their high school studies somewhere other than in Japan, it was important to ascertain this since it may be an influence upon their expectations. Question 2(a) asked the students where they had undertaken high school studies. Results in Table 2(a) provide data on the number of students who had undertaken high school studies in Australia, and who therefore, would potentially be

better prepared for and hold more realistic expectations of study in an Australian University. However, somewhat contrary to expectations, albeit on the basis of little evidence, 43 (84.3%) undertook their studies in Japan, with only 3 respondents (5.8%) undertaking high school studies in Australia.

Foundation Studies

One of the institutions whose students participated in this research required Japanese students entering at the undergraduate level to undertake a Foundation Studies program as part of the entry requirement, unless the student had successfully completed the first year of tertiary studies in a Japanese university. Students who have undertaken a Foundation Studies program in Australia are potentially better prepared for tertiary studies in this country through having been taught in an academic environment that more closely replicates the Australian tertiary environment that, if successful, they would subsequently move into. Indeed some evidence has suggested that the between 15-20% of students entering a university from a Foundation Studies Program perform better at university than those students who did not undertake such a program (Watson, Personal discussion, 2006). Question 2(b) asked students if they had undertaken a Foundation Studies program with results being presented in Table 2(b). Question 2(c) asked about the type of institution with Table 2(c) presenting data on where this had taken place.

Table 2(b): The number of students having undertaken a Foundation Studies program prior to tertiary studies

Response	Number	Percentage
No	39	76.4
Yes	6	11.7
No Response	6	11.7
Total	51	100.0

Results presented in Table 2(b) reveal however that some 39 respondents (76.4%) had not undertaken a Foundation Studies program. Furthermore, the number of students indicating that they had successfully completed such a program, 6 (11.7%), appears to be lower than expected and possibly related to not all institutions terming their programs ‘Foundation Studies’, hence respondents may not have understood or recognized the term. The question, furthermore, may have not captured all the relevant data since Foundation Studies pertains to potential

undergraduate students only. The 33 postgraduate students who participated on the research would not have undertaken Foundation Studies prior to commencing their current academic program.

Table 2(c): The type of institution where the student had undertaken their Foundation Studies program

Provider	Number	Percentage
Through an Australian university	4	66.6
Through a private provider	2	33.3
Total	6	100.0

The concept of undertaking a specific program after high school to increase the chances of attaining entry into the student’s institution of choice is common in Japan, where 40% of undergraduate students gain entry having undertaken extra studies in a *yobiko*, a cram school focusing upon tertiary entry (Ashizawa 2005). Given the tendency for Japanese students to undertake a specific program to obtain entry into university, the six students (11.7%) who indicated that they had undertaken Foundation Studies was surprisingly low. However there were a smaller number of undergraduate students among the respondents than expected and this may help explain this small number. (Refer to Chapter 2 for further information regarding *yobiko*.)

The students’ views of their level of preparedness for Australian tertiary studies

Students were asked in Question 3(a) how well they thought their high school or university experiences had prepared them for study in Australia. As revealed in Table 2(a), 43 of the participating students, (84.3%) had undertaken their high school studies in Japan. Since the role of the Japanese high school is to prepare the student for success in the University Entrance Examination it was important to ascertain the degree to which the participants felt that their high school or university experiences in Japan had prepared them for university studies in Australia. Table 3(a) reveals the degree to which the researched students felt that they were prepared for tertiary studies in Australia.

Table 3(a): How well the students felt that their high school or university experiences in Japan had prepared them for tertiary studies in Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Very well or quite well	19	37.2
A little	19	37.2
Not at all	12	23.5
No response	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Some 19 students (37.2%) felt that high school studies in Japan, had prepared them very or quite well for studies in Australia. A further 19 students (37.2%) thought that Japanese high school or university had prepared them a little for their Australian educational experience. An additional 12 individuals (23.5%) felt that their Japanese high school studies had not assisted at all. Altogether however, 31 students felt that their high school studies had prepared them only a little or not at all for their Australian university studies.

English language preparation is almost certainly an important aspect of this preparation. It was important to explore where the students had undertaken their language training in preparation for their overseas study, since those studying in an English speaking country are more likely to have been taught by a native speaker of English than those studying in a non-English speaking country, where the language teacher may have English as their second language, and may, in Japan for example, teach through the Japanese medium. Question 4(a) asked where the students had studied English. Results in Table 4(a) indicate where students had studied English in preparation for overseas study.

Some 31 students (52.5%) had undertaken their language training in Australia, with a further 17 students (28.8%) studying English in Japan. A further 11 students (18.6%) did not indicate where their language training had occurred. The students may however have undertaken language training in more than one country, thus providing multiple responses and may also have studied in both English and non-English speaking countries. Results in Tables 4(b) and 4(c) indicate the type of Australian institution where students had studied English.

Table 4(a): Where students had studied English in preparation for overseas study

Country	Number	Percentage
Australia	31	52.5
Japan	17	28.8
Other	11	18.6
Total	59	100.0

Table 4(b): Type of Australian institution where students had undertaken language training

Institution type	Number	Percentage
A private ELICOS college (1)	13	35.1
The ELICOS college belonging to another university	12	32.4
The ELICOS College belonging to this university	6	16.2
TAFE ELICOS	5	13.5
At an Australian high school	1	2.7
Total	37	100.0

(1) ELICOS: English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students

The results reported in Table 4(b) reveal that only 6 individuals (16.2%) had undertaken their language training at the ELICOS college belonging to the university of their subsequent enrollment. Slightly more than double that figure, 13 students (35.1%), had studied through a private ELICOS College, whilst 12 students (32.4%) had studied at the language school belonging to another university. Five students (12.8%) indicated that they had studied through a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) language school. One student had studied through an Australian high school.

Results in Table 4 (c) reveal two students had learned English through undertaking a TAFE vocational program. One further student indicated that his/her English language skills were learned through study in an Australian high school. It is important to consider that for entry into both TAFE and the school sector a predetermined English language level is required. Some of the institution types indicated in Tables 4(b) and 4(c) may therefore have prepared some of the students for both pre-tertiary and tertiary level programs.

Table 4(c) Other ways in which the students learned English in Australia

Way of learning English	Number	Percentage
Through a TAFE vocational course	2	66.6%
Through high school studies in Australia	1	33.3%
Total	3	100.0%

Results in Table 4(d) reveal where the students reporting that they had undertaken their language training in Japan had studied. Currently, all students in Japan study the English language in the school sector and the majority in the tertiary sector also. (See Chapter 2.) However, results in Table 4(d) reveal that only 4 respondents (23.5%) cited junior and/or senior high school as somewhere where language training had occurred. Only one student indicated a university. Three respondents (17.6%) maintained that they had studied by themselves. The numbers are small and thus need to be interpreted with caution. [Refer to Appendix C, Table 4(f), for information regarding other learning environments through which the students maintained they had gained their language skills.]

Table 4(d): Where students who had undertaken language training in Japan had studied

Institution	Number	Percentage
By myself	3	17.6
Junior high school	2	11.7
Senior high school	2	11.7
University	1	5.8
No response	9	52.9
Total	17	100.0

The time spent on English language training for their current program

Question 4(e) asked the students how long they had spent on English language training specifically for their Australian university program. Results in Table 4(e) reveal that 18 students (35.2%), over one third of the total respondents, had spent only up to six months undertaking language training prior to the commencement of their current academic program, with a further

12 students, (23.5%), studying English for from six to twelve months. Only 6 students (11.7%) indicated that they had studied for more than twelve months. Fifteen students (29.4%) did not respond to this question, which may indicate that they had not studied English specifically for their current program, or had spent longer than they had originally anticipated and, in order to save ‘face’, did not respond. While the study did not attempt to determine actual levels of English language proficiency of the respondents, the self-reported amounts of time spent on English language preparation for tertiary level study in that language would appear too short for many students (see Discussion chapter). While the issues are complex, with this knowledge, and considering cost as a factor, institutions may be better able to structure their language programs to match the optimum time frame(s) available to the students through the development of programs of different durations.

Table 4(e): The time spent on English language training

Time	Number	Percentage
Up to Six Months	18	35.2
Six – twelve months	12	23.5
More than twelve Months	6	11.7
No response	15	29.4
Total	51	100.0

Student familiarity with a Japanese university campus

It was important to ascertain how many students had visited a university campus in Japan, the extent to which the student had observed and perhaps participated, and whether this had informed their expectations regarding university life in Australia. Questions 5(a) and (b) explored these points. Table 5(a) reveals how many students had been onto a university campus in Japan, with Table 5(b) presenting how many of the students had audited a lecture. Results in Table 5(a) reveal that some 40 students (78.4%) had been onto a university campus in Japan, while 11 (21.5%) had not. Table 5(b) indicates that 36 of those students (70.5%) had listened to a lecture, which may have informed the students’ expectations of the lecture environment in Australia.

Table 5(a): Students who had been onto a university campus in Japan

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	40	78.4
No	11	21.5
Total	51	100.0

Table 5(b): Students who had listened to a university lecture in Japan

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	36	70.5
No	13	25.4
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Question 6(a) asked students to choose from 5 given statements which (whilst still in Japan) most accurately reflected their thoughts regarding their future Australian campus. Table 6(a) presents the results.

Table 6(a): Students thoughts and expectations regarding their Australian campus when still in Japan

Thoughts/expectations	Number	Percentage
Look different but feel the same	2	3.9
As in Japan	2	3.9
Similar to in Japan	6	11.7
Look the same but feel different	14	27.4
Nothing like in Japan	27	52.9
Total	51	100.0

There are considerable differences between the lecture environment in Australian and Japanese universities (see Chapter 2). The 41 students, (80%), who thought or expected their Australian university to either ‘Look the same but feel different’, or be ‘Nothing like in Japan’ in Table 6(a) were clearly aware, of the potential for broad differences. It is possible however that this may relate more to the ‘campus life’ aspect a Japanese institution, rather than the academic side. It is important to note, however, that 8 (15.6%) expected it to be as in Japan or similar.

Student familiarity with an Australian university

Students were asked in both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview about their expectations of an Australian university and its campus when compared to a Japanese institution. Responses covered both the physical aspects of the campus, and also the academic issues of studying overseas. Some students used this question to articulate both their thoughts regarding Japanese tertiary institutions *per se*, and their expectations regarding Australia. Note that student numbers from 1-51 denote that the origin is from written comments in the questionnaire, while numbers from 52 onward are quotes from the semi-structured interviews. Responses indicated an awareness of both academic and non-academic characteristics, specifically covering: a) the academic atmosphere, b) the architecture, and c) the non-academic role of the Japanese tertiary level undergraduate education system. Regarding the similarities and differences between Japanese and Australian universities they said:

‘I thought university is the place to socialise with my friends like it is in Japan.’ (Student #51)

‘Because there is nothing to learn from Japanese universities.’ (Student #1)

‘As a research student I did not expect so much about my campus itself. I just wanted very basic things. Libraries and the computer.’ (Student #43)

‘I expected buildings to look the same but atmosphere to be completely different because the expectation for students in Japan is that they do not participate in discussion work independently, it was really passive life.’ (Student #6)

‘I expected architecture to be different, more like that in the UK or Europe.’ (Student #56)

‘To be more spacious than in Japan, Foreign Dramas on TV only show locker rooms.’ (Student #81)

‘The imagination of overseas uni is elegant (more elegant than in Japan).’ (Student #8).

The theme, regarding the social as opposed to a serious academic role of the Japanese university sector at the undergraduate level, was echoed by a number of students in written comments in the questionnaire:

'I've never been onto a campus in Japan, but I think students' attitudes are different. University students in Japan have less intention to study, because once they enter the uni it's not so hard to graduate.' (Student #13)

'When I was in uni in Japan it seems to me most students do not study hard. They just have fun during uni such as drinking or doing part time job more than study.' (Student #48)

These themes were explored further in the semi-structured interview. Student #81 commented that: *'Australian Universities were easy to get into but hard to get out of'*, that is to graduate, and continued *'Students must work very hard in Australia'*. This in a sense was further refined by Student #60 who remarked in the semi-structured interview that, *'In Australia students go to university to get a qualification, in Japan they go to get a job'*.

Some students compared their Japanese experiences with what they were finding to be the case in Australia: *'...student's attitude is different: Japan – more killing time before getting job, more fashionable'* (Student #48).

This comment regarding fashion was also echoed by Student #15 who noted: *'Not necessary to dress up when I go to uni in Australia'*. Comments made referring to fashion relate to the social requirement of dressing to meet the latest 'trend' whilst at university. *'Japanese Universities seem more of an 'entertainment institution'. (XXX)University seems more academic.'* (Student #18). (University not identified to help maintain student anonymity.)

Comments made by some students did demonstrate an expectation that their study program in Australia would be more demanding academically than was the case in Japan and that they would be required to take more responsibility for their studies: *'I thought that Australian unis have much more flexibility and students have more responsibilities on their study'* (Student #46), with other participants also aware of the greater number of assignments in an Australian Institution: *'University in Australia will give me more specific / academic knowledge and lots of assignments'* (Student #47).

The attitude of Japanese academic staff to study was explored further in the semi-structured interview, with one student commenting that *'Japanese lecturers have no interest in teaching, the reason being that students are not interested'*. The student continued: *'If you email a Japanese professor, few respond. They are very authoritarian and students cannot demand. With overseas professors, [i.e. in Australia] especially with international students they were happy to*

respond.' This was not the attitude that the student had expected and '*it made it easier because academic staff were approachable*' (Student #60). These comments made by students regarding their expectations of the Australian university campus are significant, since they illustrate, not just the potential physical differences between Australian and Japanese campuses, but also the very real differences in the purpose(s) for entering Australian universities.

Section Two: You in Australia

It was important to ascertain how many of the participating students had visited a university campus in Australia prior to enrollment, the reason for this, and the impact that this might have on their expectations. Question 7 in parts (a), (b), and (c) (d) and (e) explored how many students had been onto an Australian university campus prior to enrollment and what they had done that might give them an understanding of the expectations in the Australian context. Results in Table 7(a) indicate that 30 students (58.8%) had visited an Australian university campus prior to enrolment, but 20 students (39.2%) had not.

Table 7(a): Students who had been onto a university campus in Australia prior to enrollment

Visited a campus	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	58.8
No	20	39.2
No response	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 7(b): Those who had sat in on a lecture

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	22	41.3
No	28	54.9
No response	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 7(b) reveal that some 22 of the visiting students (41.3%) maintained that they had audited a lecture prior to enrolling in their Australian institution. However, 28 (54.9%), the

majority of those students visiting an Australian campus, did not audit a lecture. Regarding those, the results to the question of who had tried to listen to the lecture reported in Table 7 (c) indicate that only 20 had tried to listen to the lecture they had audited.

Table 7(c): Those who had tried to listen to the lecture

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	80.0
No	4	16.0
No response	1	4.0
Total	25	100.0

Question 7(d) explored how much of the audited lecture the students could understand through provided statements. Although only 22 of the visiting students indicated that they had audited a lecture, results in Table 7(d) indicate that 34 students (68.6%) responded to Question 7(d), where students were asked to react to a range of statements reflecting their feelings regarding the audited lecture. The 12 additional responses may have been referring to a lecture/s attended after enrollment. Three respondents agreed that ‘It was really easy to understand so I was not worried’, while 3 agreed they could not understand anything. Ten respondents indicated that it was very difficult to understand because it was in specialized English. Five indicated that it was nothing like they expected and it made them concerned. A further 13 agreed that ‘It was similar to my expectations, but I could understand some of it which made me happy’. There may have been a number of reasons why students auditing the lecture could not understand it easily, including that it was in a subject area that the student knew very little or nothing about.

Notwithstanding that, the number able to understand easily, 3 respondents, indicates that there appear to have been generally serious problems in understanding the language content and purpose of the lecture judging by responses. Furthermore, since most of the students were not participating in an academic sense, and were not actually being assessed on their learning, it is possible that their ‘understanding’ was erroneous, thus providing a false sense of security for the student regarding meaningful comprehension.

Table 7(d): How much of the lecture the student could understand

Provided Response	Number	Percentage
It was similar to my expectations, but I could understand some of it which made me feel happy.	13	38.2
It was just what I had expected, very difficult to understand because it was in specialized English.	10	29.4
It was nothing like I had expected, many people were listening carefully and taking notes, it made me feel concerned	5	14.7
It was really easy for me to follow so I was not worried.	3	8.8
I could not understand anything	3	8.8
Total	34	100.0

It is important to consider not only what the students were academically expecting to understand, but also what their personal expectations of a ‘lecture’ were. Since 73.4% of students had also sat in on a lecture in Japan (Table 5b), the responses of students that indicate concern might relate to the more active role played by the observed students in the Australian lecture, or to the way in which specialist vocabulary may have been used. The issue of preparation of these international students for more effective learning in the Australian university context is considered in more depth in the Discussion chapter.

Question 7 (e) asked students why they had gone on to campus if not for a lecture, prior to the commencement of their academic program. Their reasons were wide ranging, with multiple responses possible to this question. Table 7(e) presents the reasons that the students had visited a university campus prior to enrollment.

Table 7(e): The purpose of visiting the campus prior to enrolment

Reason for visit	Number	Percentage
To sit in on a lecture / To meet academic staff	21	39.6
To use facilities, e.g. library, computers, to study, to research	11	20.7
To feel the atmosphere/look around	9	16.9
For application / course information administrative / reasons	6	11.3
To meet people / friends	5	9.4
English language training	1	1.0
Total	53	100.0

Results in Table 7(e) reveal that individuals may also have visited for multiple reasons, such as to sit in on a lecture or meet academic staff, referred to by 21 students (39.6%). A further 11 students (20.7%) indicated that the visit was to use the institution's facilities, with 9 students (16.9%) looking around and feeling the atmosphere on campus. The presence on campus of these students potentially creates an opportunity for an institution's promotional staff to access these students without incurring costs associated with recruitment visits to Japan. More importantly it possibly allows the students' needs to be better researched and understood, and thus be more easily met by the institution, and for the students themselves to obtain a clearer, better picture of an Australian tertiary experience.

Talking to other Japanese students

An important source of information regarding study in Australia for Japanese students is likely to be other Japanese students who are either enrolled in, or have graduated from, an Australian university. This is particularly the case within the Japanese hierarchical system, where concepts such as the *kohai* (junior) seeking advice from one's *senpai* (senior) are important in decision making (see Chapter 2). Responses to Questions 8(a) and 8(b) regarding this, are reported in Tables 8(a) and 8(b).

Table 8(a): Students who had spoken to other Japanese students who had been to, or were at university in Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	40	78.4
No	9	17.6
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 8(a) reveals that a substantial number of students, some 40 individuals (78.4%), had spoken to other Japanese students who had been at an Australian university prior to enrolling into university in Australia themselves. Some 9 students (17.6%) had not.

Question 8(b) explored what the students had been told about study in Australia by other students. The impact and influence of those students and the comments that previous students made are potentially very important in helping establish expectations, and possibly very accurate ones. Results reported in Table 8(b) indicate that 34 students (56.6%) were told that study in Australia would be tough or hard, although how they interpreted ‘tough’ is unclear. Whether ‘face’ was being saved by those who had or were studying here through describing their studies in this way cannot be confirmed. Six students (10%) were told that they would have a great experience, with 4 students (6.6%), being told that they would benefit and that it [the experience] was worth it. A further 3 students (5.0%) were told that that lectures were ‘useful, practical and good’. Two students (3.3%) were told that it would become ‘easier’, with 1 student commenting that entry [to university] was easy.

Five students were told that there was ‘not enough time’. What this means is somewhat ambiguous. Since tertiary studies in Japan are typically focused upon socializing (see Chapter 2), the comment made by the five individuals may relate to more to their inability to socialize due to their academic workload, or to the additional time required by non native speakers of English to respond in class and complete assignments. Such interpretations however are speculative. Two participating students had been told by existing or graduated students that the program/s undertaken was/were not good, and that the standard was lower than in Japan. No further details were made available to the researcher regarding the unsatisfactory courses, and it should be borne in mind that these comments had not preventing the students from enrolling, so may have been counter-balanced by other comments and factors.

Table 8(b): What the students had said about their experiences here

Comment	Number	Percentage
Study is tough / hard/ students must study hard	34	56.6
Great experience	6	10.0
Not enough time	5	8.3
You will benefit / It is worth it	4	6.6
Lectures are useful / practical / good	3	5.0
It will get easier	2	3.3
It is difficult to graduate	2	3.3
It is not good, lower standard than in Japan	2	3.3
Cost is an issue	1	1.6
Entry is easy	1	1.6
Total	60	100.0

The students were then asked in Questions 8(c i-iii) their reaction to the comments that had been made to them by others. It is important, when considering these results reported in Table 8(ci-iii), to recall that saving ‘face’ is important in Japan, both publicly and to self. A student is unlikely, despite the anonymity of the questionnaire, to respond in a way counter to cultural conditioning. This may be reflected in the numbers, with only 33 students out of 51 responding to the question.

Table 8(c i): Did what they say scare you

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes -Agree	15	45.4
No - Disagree	18	54.5
Total	33	100.0

Table 8(c ii): Did what they say not worry you at all

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes -Agree	15	53.5
No- Disagree	13	46.4
Total	28	99.9

Table 8(c iii): Did what they say reassure you that it would be OK

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes -Agree	17	78.0
No- Disagree	8	32.4
Total	25	100.0

Some 15 students (45.4%) agreed in Table 8(c i) that the comments made had 'scared them'. However, a slightly higher figure of 18 students (54.5%) indicated that this was not the case. Issues of 'face' however, would typically generally prevent a public admission of concern.

Fifteen students (53.5%) agreed in Table 8(c ii) that the comments made by students would not worry them at all. Since saving 'face' is paramount, however the 15 students may have responded in this way to meet the cultural norm. Thirteen students however (46.4%) did not agree, suggesting that the comments made by the students were of concern. In Table 8(c iii) results indicate that 17 students (68%) maintained that the comments made by other students reassured them that 'it would be OK', with some 8 students (32%) indicating that this was not the case. It is possible that there may be influence derived from where the comments are delivered. Results in Table 8(d) indicate where the potential students had spoken to other Japanese students. Some 33 students (70.2%) had spoken in Australia, with only 12 (25.5%) speaking in Japan.

Table 8(d): Where the students had spoken

Country	Number	Percentage
Japan	12	25.5
Australia	33	70.2
No response	2	4.2
Total	47	100.0

The decision-making process regarding study overseas

The question of who makes the decision to study overseas is an important one from the perspective of promotion to overseas students. Question 9(a) asked the students whose idea it had been that they study overseas. The results presented in Table 9(a) reveal that 46 students, over 85% of the cohort, indicated that the decision was their own. Despite this, these results need to be interpreted with caution since this may not be the case, particularly when the student is funded by parents or other family members. Six students (11.1%) indicated that family members had initiated the overseas sojourn, with both parents or the father appearing to play an important role. There is the potential for influence by older friends or siblings who may have studied overseas. Two students (3.7%) did indicate that an older friend had studied outside Japan. Whereas influence is to be expected through a *kohai/sempei* relationship, the small numbers involved mean interpretations must be tentative. If the figure of 46 individual students (85.1%) determining themselves to study overseas is accurate, this may suggest important socio-cultural changes in Japan regarding authority within the family, and be worthy of further research.

Table 9(a): Whose idea it had been for the student to study overseas

Source of idea	Number	Percentage
Self	46	85.1
Family members*	6	11.1
Teacher		0.0
An older friend who had studied overseas	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

* Parents jointly, mother, father or fiancé.

When the decision to study overseas was made

Students were asked in Question 9(b) how long prior to arriving they had made their decision to study in Australia, and in Question 9(c) their age at that time. An understanding of such time frames can assist institutions develop targeted promotional campaigns, and also appropriate support systems. Results in Table 9(b) relate to when the students decided to study in Australia, with results in Table 9(c) relating to the student's age at that time.

Results in Table 9 (b) reveal 24 students (47.0%) indicated that they had made the decision to study between 1 year and 3½ years prior to the commencement of the academic program. Fourteen students, (27.4%) had made the decision within 6 months of commencement. A further

five students (9.8%) decided to study between 5 and 10 year prior to commencement. Four students (7.8%) made the decision after arriving in Australia with 1 further student (1.9%) deciding a few years prior. The exact meaning of ‘a few years’ was hard to determine exactly hence is reported separately. The age of the student when determining to study in Australia is also important when related to both the decision making process within the family, and also to the receiving institutions, who may require promotional material aimed at different cohorts, for example undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and thus also ages of students.

Table 9(b): How long prior to arriving in Australia the student had made the decision to study here

Timeframe	Number	Percentage
1 day – 6 months	14	27.4
1 year - 3 1/2 years	24	47.0
5 years - 10 years	5	9.8
After arrival into Australia	4	7.8
A few years prior	1	1.9
No Response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

Question 9(c) asked the age of the student when they had decided to study in Australia. The results are reported in Table 9(c). The typical age of the researched cohort when deciding to study in Australia appears to be between 20 and 30 years, with 33 students, (64.7%), in this age range when making the decision to study here. Cross checking of responses with other responses indicated that the average age of the 19 undergraduate students responding to the question was 20 years and 7 months when the decision was made to study in Australia. A further 19 students studying at the postgraduate level had an average age of 23 years and 4 months when the decision was made. Three students did not respond to the question.

Ten students (19.6%) appear to have made the decision to study whilst still in high school. This could suggest that either there is awareness at the high school level of overseas educational opportunities, or that for some of these students Australia was a second chance at the educational ladder, having been unable to enter their institution of choice in Japan. Anecdotal evidence does point to students having visited Australia through high school exchange programs returning for tertiary studies. Both students #4 and #9 indicated that they had previously participated in

exchange programs, with student #9 indicating that this had been at the high school level. With a view to better understanding this cohort, respondents were asked in Question 10(a) in its various parts to respond to a range of statements relating to their views and/or concerns regarding their decision to come to Australia to study.

Table 9(c): Student's age when deciding to study in Australia

Age	Number	Percentage
14-15	2	3.9
15	1	1.9
16	3	5.8
17	3	5.8
18	3	5.8
19	1	1.9
20	4	7.8
21	2	3.9
22	4	7.8
23	5	9.8
24	4	7.8
25	1	1.9
26	1	1.9
27	3	5.8
28	4	7.8
29	2	3.9
30	3	5.8
37	1	1.9
39	1	1.9
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

Students were also asked to respond on their own behalf, and speculate how they thought their parents would, regarding issues relating to both the academic experience and socio-cultural concerns in Question 10 with a variety of sub-parts. These questions covered the quality of education (10a i), the students ability to look after themselves (10 a ii), issues related with loneliness for both the student in Australia and their family in Japan (10a iii and iv), who would look after their parents during their absence (10a v), to excitement at studying overseas (10a vi), concerns regarding the student’s English language level (10a vii), could they live without their friends in Japan (10a viii), and concerns regarding ‘Will I make friends easily’ (10a ix). Question 10(a x) asked the importance of ‘Who to depend upon if I have problem’, while Questions 10(a xi) and 10(a xii) respectively asked the importance of ‘Will I stay Japanese’ and ‘Have I chosen the right university’. Tables 10(a i-xii) presents the students’ responses and their beliefs regarding their parents’ response.

Table 10(a i): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Concern regarding the quality of education

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite, or reasonably important	43	84.3	34	66.6
Not very or not important at all	3	5.8	13	25.4
No response	5	9.8	4	7.8
Total	51	100.00	51	100.00

Perhaps, as would be anticipated, the quality of education appears to be more important to the students with 43, (84.3%) in Table 10 (a i) indicating that it was very, quite, or reasonably important to them. In the students’ opinions however, a smaller number, 34, (66.6%) but still a majority of their parents, were judged to believe it was very, quite, or reasonably important. However, this is speculative only since this is the students’ view of their parents’ opinion and thus may be erroneous. However, speculative though this may be, there may be some justification in this instance since as one student stated in the semi-structured interview: ‘*Parents do not have much of an idea – they are only interested in the result, they think differently – gambaru is OK*’ (Student # 73).

Table 10(a ii): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Concern about my ability to look after myself

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	29	58.8	37	72.5
Not very or not important at all	13	25.4	8	15.6
No response	9	17.6	6	11.7
Total	51	100.00	51	100.00

Question 10 (a ii) explored the students’ abilities to look after themselves with, as reported in Table 10 (a ii), 29 students (58.8%), and in their view, 37 parents (72.5%) indicating that ‘Concern about my ability to look after myself’ was very, quite or reasonably important. The difference between the numbers of students themselves indicating this and their parents may relate to Australia being unknown to the students’ parents. Thirteen respondents (25.4%), indicated that this was not very, or not important at all to them while a further 8 individuals (15.6%), indicating that to their parents also this would be not very or not important at all. While the numbers of answers in this latter category are small, some of these results may reflect comfort felt in Australia due to previous visits made by 29 of the participating students (56.8%) [see Tables 11(a) and 11(b)], and/or the larger than expected cohort of somewhat older, postgraduate students.

Given the importance of socio-cultural support systems in Japan, for example through ‘the group’ and the family, Question 10(a iii) explored loneliness for the student without their family. The results are presented in Table 10(a iii). The responses indicate that for 17 students (33.3%), ‘Loneliness without my family’ but was very, quite, or reasonably important and they also considered that 22 parents (43.1%) would feel the same way. To 30 students (58.8%) and 23 parents (45.0%), this was perceived as not very or not important at all.

Table 10(a iii): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Loneliness for me without my family

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	17	33.3	22	43.1
Not very, or not important at all	30	58.8	23	45.0
No Response	4	7.8	6	11.7
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Question 10(a iv) explored the theme of loneliness for the student’s family whilst the student was in Australia. The results are reported in Table 10(a iv). The results in Table 10(a iv) reveal for 21 students, (41.1%) ‘Loneliness for my family without me’ was very, quite, or reasonably important to them. In the students’ opinion, 28 parents (54.9%) also would feel that this way. A further 21 students (41.1%) indicated that this was not very, or not important at all to them, with 21 students (41.1%), also indicating this to be not very, or not important at all to their parents. Whether or not there were siblings at home in Japan may well have influenced these results.

Table 10(a iv): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Loneliness for my family without me

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	21	41.1	28	54.9
Not very, or not important at all	21	41.1	21	41.1
No Response	9	17.6	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Question 10(a v) explored the importance of who would look after the students’ parents whilst they were overseas with the results reported in Table 10(a v). Traditionally, Japanese parents

have expected support from their children as they age, leading to greater dependency in later years. The results reveal that for 24 of the responding students (47.0%), this was not very or not important at all. In their opinion, an even greater number of their parents, some 36 representing 70.5% of parents, ‘Who would look after my parents’ was not very or not important at all. This may relate to other family members in Japan carrying out this role during the student’s absence, and may also demonstrate major changes to Japanese society where fewer parents are dependent upon their sons and daughters living at home. The age of the parents may also have been a factor influencing these results. Some 10 students, (19.6%) did not respond to this question from the students’ perspective, with 9 non-respondents (17.6%) from the parental perspective. This might relate to students having siblings supporting their parents whilst the student is overseas.

Table 10(a v): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Who would look after my parents

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	17	33.3	6	11.7
Not very, or not important at all	24	47.0	36	70.5
No response	10	19.6	9	17.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Studying overseas is not all about academia, and Question 10(a vi) explored the question of excitement at living overseas. Results reported in Table 10(a vi) appear to indicate that excitement at living overseas is very, quite or reasonably important to some 30 students (58.8%), with 27 parents (52.9%) being considered to share this excitement. However, for 11 (21.5%) students and 18 (35.2%) parents this was considered not very or not important at all.

Table 10(a vi): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Excitement at living overseas

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	30	58.8	27	52.9
Not very, or not important at all.	11	21.5	18	35.2
No response	10	19.6	7	11.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

English language ability is a critical component to academic success in Australia. Question 10(a vii) explored this through the question ‘Is my English good enough?’, with the results presented in Table 10(a vii). Results here reveal that to some 33 students (64.7%) their language ability was considered very, quite or reasonably important while the students judged that this was the case for 19 parents (37.2%). To 22 (43.1%), of the parents however, this was felt to be not very, or not important at all with only 7 (13.7%) of students holding this view. Some 11 students (21.5%) did not respond to this question on English language ability from the students’ perspective, with a further 10 (19.6%) not responding from the parental view. This may relate to ‘face’ being saved by students who had concerns regarding their language ability.

The results regarding parents were discussed further in the semi-structured interview where Student #60 commented that Japanese parents were very insular and thus do not understand the need for English. The student continued that since it [English] was not required in Japan they [the parents] did not see [or understand] the need for English in Australia. Student #81 commented that since parents were not literate in English themselves, they could not gauge the level of language required. In addition, Student #56 indicated that, since this was the students’ thoughts regarding their parents’ responses, there may have been a lack of understanding by some students regarding ‘parental understanding’.

Table 10(a vii): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Is my English good enough

Ranking	Answers regarding student	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parent
Very, quite or reasonably important	33	64.7	19	37.2
Not very or not important at all	7	13.7	22	43.1
No response	11	21.5	10	19.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Membership of ‘the group’ is critical in Japan, and thus the question of living without friends was an important aspect to consider. It was explored in Question 10(a viii) with the students’ responses presented in Table 10(a viii). Results here indicate that ‘Can I live without my friends’ was not very, or not important at all to 24 students, (47.0%). In the students’ opinion, 24 parents (47.0%) would have agreed with this. However 14 students (27.4%) indicated that living without their friends was very, quite or reasonably important. The students’ thoughts pertaining to their parents suggested that 19 parents (37.2%) also felt this way. Question 10(a ix) explored further the ease and importance of making friends in Australia.

Table 10(a viii): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Can I live without my friends

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	14	27.4	19	37.2
Not very or not important at all	24	47.0	24	47.0
No response	13	25.4	8	15.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Results in Table 10(a ix) pertaining to ‘Will I make friends easily’, indicate this was very, quite or reasonably important to 21 students (41.1%), while it was not very or not important at all to 18 students (35.2%). To the students’ parents, ‘Will I make friends easily’, was viewed as being very, quite or reasonably important to 23 respondents (45.0%), and not very or not important at all to a further 20 (39.2%). These figures may need to be interpreted with caution in that students may have thought that ‘friend’ pertained to Australian students. The expectation of being part of a circle of friends (the group) is important to Japanese providing as it does comfort and mutual support within the group where each is typically dependent upon the other and can expect support from within that group. In Australia however, that group may not exist, particularly when the student first arrives in the country.

Table 10(a ix): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Will I make friends easily

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	21	41.1	23	45.0
Not very or not important at all	18	35.2	20	39.2
No response	12	23.5	8	15.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

The importance of having someone to depend upon if the student does have a problem cannot be underestimated. Question 10(a x) explored the importance of this by requiring responses to ‘Who will I depend on if I have a problem’. Results in Table 10(a x) indicate that, whereas to some 27 students (52.9%), it was very, quite or reasonably important to have someone to turn to with a problem, it was, in the students’ view, relatively more important for their parents, 34 of whom (66.6%) were considered to believe that this was very, quite or reasonably important. This perhaps is to be expected, since typically the students’ parents are not familiar with the Australian educational system and potentially unaware of support systems in place. To 14 students (27.4%), however, this was not very or not important at all. The students also judged that, for 8 of their parents (15.6%), this was not very or not important at all. These findings regarding parents may be linked to parental expectations of their child having a ‘guardian’ in Australia to support the young person and provide advice.

Table 10(a x): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Who to depend on if I have a problem

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	27	52.9	34	66.6
Not very or not important at all	14	27.4	8	15.6
No response	10	19.6	9	17.6
Total	51	100.00	51	100.00

Question 10(a xi) explored the importance of staying Japanese whilst overseas, typically referred to as maintaining ‘modesty’. The results are presented in Table 10(a xi). In a group society such as Japan, staying within an acceptable range of behaviours, thus demonstrating compliance and with socio-cultural expectations, is important. Personal experience of the researcher, confirmed by findings from the semi-structured interview, suggests that this may be referred to as maintaining ‘modesty’. Modesty in Japan however also encompasses concepts such as naivety, or shyness, both of which further relate to demonstrating innocence in Japan. Linked with this is the unacceptability of boasting about one’s achievements.

Japanese people have clear ideas about what being Japanese entails, as commented upon by Student #73, who said Japanese people do not like people ‘*who boast themselves*’. Another two students stated:

‘...people expect modesty, it is a social expectation’ (Student #80)

‘Although I have been studying overseas for a couple of years I am definitely Japanese. I think Japanese people have a unique way of regarding what ‘modesty’ is’ (Student #18).

Table 10(a xi): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Will I stay Japanese

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding Parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably important	16	31.3	17	33.3
Not very, or not important at all.	21	41.1	24	47.0
No response	14	27.4	10	19.6
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Results to the question asking for responses to ‘Will I stay Japanese?’, reported in Table 10(a xi), indicate that for 16 students (31.3%) this was seen as being very, quite or reasonably important, and for 17 parents (33.3%). Staying Japanese was thought to be unimportant to the some 21 students (41.1%), and in their opinion, to some 24 parents (47%). Some 14 students (27.4%) did not respond to this question, with a further 10 (19.6%) not responding from their parents’ perspective. This may be indicative of the impact of the social changes occurring in Japan, or may demonstrate a lack of understanding regarding the question itself.

Table 10(a xii): The relative importance to the students and their families of specific educational and socio-cultural issues: Have I chosen the right university

Ranking	Answers regarding students	Percentage of students	Answers regarding parents	Percentage of parents
Very, quite or reasonably Important	36	70.5	31	60.7
Not very or not important at all	11	21.5	20	39.2
No response	4	7.8	0	
Total	51	100.0	51	100.0

Since the students are all studying in Australia, it was important to ascertain whether or not they thought that they had made the correct decision in terms of the institution that they had enrolled

into. Question 10(a xii) explored this theme via asking for responses to ‘Have I chosen the right university’. The results are reported in Table 10(a xii).

Results in Table 10(a xii) reveal that for 36 students (70.5%) ‘Have I chosen the right university’ was viewed as very, quite or reasonably important, as for 31 parents (60.7%). For 11 students, (21%), and in their opinion 20 (39.2%) of their parents, this was not very, or not important at all. The explanation of these last responses may relate to the different purpose of determining which university to apply for in Japan, linked with the parents potentially having little knowledge of the Australian tertiary sector.

Visits to Australia and reasons

Students were asked in Question 11(a) if they had visited Australia previously, and if so, for what purpose. As reported in Tables 11(a) and 11(b) a not inconsiderable number of the students participating in this research had visited Australia previously for a range of purposes, both social and educational. Results in Table 11(a) indicate that some 29 of the surveyed students (56.8%) had visited Australia previously. Some 19 (31.3%) had not. Results in Table 11(b) furthermore indicate that 8 students (27.5%), of the 29 responding to the question, had made multiple visits to Australia.

Table 11(a): Students who had visited Australia previously

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	29	56.8
No	16	31.3
No Response	6	11.7
Total	51	100.0

Table 11(b): Number of students having made multiple visits to Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Made multiple visits to Australia	8	27.5
Previous visits to Australia	29	72.5
Total	37	100.0

The purpose of the earlier visits is important when considering trends, with Table 11(c) revealing the reasons cited for the earlier visit/s. Results in Table 11(c) involving categorization of

responses reveal that, of the students who had visited previously, some 21 individuals, (65.6%) cited holiday, travel, sightseeing, short-term home stay programs, or visiting friends or family as the main purpose for the visit. All students were then asked in Question 11(d) what the overriding reason was for choosing Australia as a study destination. The results are reported in Table 11(d).

Table 11(c): Reasons for visit(s)

Reason	Number	Percentage
Holiday/Travel/Sightseeing/ Short term Home Stay program/ Visiting friends or family	21	65.6
Exchange student	2	6.2
Working holiday program	3	9.3
To study English language	1	3.1
Due to father's work	1	3.1
To experience a different culture	1	3.1
To study (non specific)	1	3.1
To work	1	3.1
To visit proposed institution	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Table 11(d): Overriding reason for choosing Australia as a study destination

Reason	Number	Percentage
Australia specifically	64	65.3
Educational	29	29.5
Personal	5	5.1
Total	98	100.0

In terms of why the students chose Australia as their study destination, results in Table 11(d) reveals that, after categorization, 64 reasons (65.3%) related to Australia specifically, 29 reasons (29.5%) were linked to education, and 5 (5.1%) were personal. The majority of reasons being

non-educational in nature was considered surprising, given the amount of money involved in being full fee paying students and along with living costs while in Australia. These findings are considered in greater detail in the Discussion chapter. As part of the question, those students referring to educational reasons were asked and able to provide multiple, more specific academic reasons for choosing Australia as their study destination, with results presented in Table 11(e).

Results presented in Table 11(e) reveal that 9 responses (30%) the reputation of the Australian educational system was the deciding factor, with a further 7 (23.3%) influenced by the availability of their specific discipline. Although 'Good faculty' was advanced as a reason, by some respondents it is unclear whether this pertains to the American understanding of 'faculty', that is academic staff, or the Australian meaning of an academic unit, thus the influence is unclear in relation to this factor. Four responses (13.3%) related to the importance for them of the range and standard of course offerings, with a further four (13.3%) by the flexibility of the application procedures. Three responses (10%) indicated the importance of the quality of academic staff, with a further 3 (10%) citing miscellaneous reasons. Many of these reasons fall into the general category of quality of university education in Australia as a source of motivation for studying in Australia (see Chapter 2).

Table 11(e): The main educational reasons students cited by category

Reason	Number	Percentage
Reputation: 1) High quality universities 2) Australia seen as the educational or knowledge centre of Asia. 3) A high level of education in Australia	9	30.0
Discipline Specific: 1) Related to students' discipline 2) Good staff in the student's area. 3) Discipline well known and training in the discipline highly regarded in Australia.	7	23.3
Courses: 1) Subjects available* 2) High quality / Interesting courses 3) Program Length	4	13.3
Entry: 1) Entry relatively easy. 2) Recognition of prior learning. 3) Acceptance into a postgraduate program from different undergraduate major.	4	13.3
Academic Staff: 1) Enthusiastic teachers 2) Good faculty 3) Teacher in Japan was Australian	3	10.0
Miscellaneous: 1) An exchange partner university 2) Wanted to study in English	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

*'Subjects' has been interpreted as referring to individual courses.

Some students cited personal reasons for coming to Australia; a more detailed break-down of these are presented in Table 11(f). It is perhaps not unreasonable to expect that, for some

students, a personal relationship may have been the main purpose for coming to Australia. However the numbers in Table 11(f) are small, and thus cannot be viewed as being reflective of any real trends, indicating only the complexity of life experiences and choices.

Table 11(f): The main personal reasons cited by students for choosing Australia as a study destination

Reason	Number	Percentage
To join a friend who was here	3	60
To join husband	1	20
Came with father's work	1	20
Total	5	100.0

Question 11(g) explored the wide range of Australian attractions, both academic and non-academic, that had brought the students to Australia. Respondents were able to provide multiple reasons for choosing Australia as their study destination. Results of reasons categorized and presented in Table 11(g) reveal that 22 students, (37.9%) indicated that the primary factor related to Australia the country and her people. For 11 students (18.9%) the decision was based on financial issues, with a further 10 students (17.2%) choosing Australia as an English speaking country. Four students (6.8%) had come to Australia on a Working Holiday visa, with a further four (6.8%) indicating that proximity to Japan was the deciding factor. For two students (3.4%) the deciding factor appears to have been arrived at through a process of elimination, having already studied outside Japan. One student indicated 'lots of nature', another 'enjoyed previous visit', a third 'indicated they came 'to repay earlier kindness', and a fourth 'to teach Japanese here', as their reason for studying in Australia. This response was the only one seriously indicating employment as a motivating factor in choosing Australia as a study destination.

The wide range of reasons for wishing to study in Australia as presented in Table 11(g) appears to suggest that in some cases the students' personal needs may be of greater significance than the academic program being sought. One student indicated that an advertisement in a Japanese magazine had been the motivating factor. Surprisingly, this was the only reference made by any of the respondents to promotional material.

Table 11(g): The main ‘Australian’ reasons cited by the students for choosing Australia as their study destination

Reason	Number	Percentage
1) Felt comfortable in Australia 2) People are kind 3) Comfortable lifestyle, Good weather 4) The Australian way of life 5) Australia is safe /Safer than other countries 6) Australia is my favorite country 7) Long interest in Australia 8) Cultural diversity	22	37.9
1) Related to financial issues	11	18.9
1) Australia is English speaking 2) Interested in Australian English	10	17.2
1) Via Working Holiday Visa 2) Availability of Working Holiday Visa	4	6.8
1) Proximity to Japan	4	6.8
1) Had lived in US and wanted another experience 2) Elimination: Not the USA/UK/New Zealand or Canada	2	3.4
1) Advertisement in Japanese magazine	1	1.7
1) Lots of nature	1	1.7
1) Enjoyed previous visit	1	1.7
1) To repay earlier kindness (not specified)	1	1.7
1) To teach Japanese here.	1	1.7
Total	58	100.0

Preparation for study in Australia

What students did to prepare for study in Australia is an important question. Since most useful information is likely to be found in print form regarding culture and university academic expectations, students were asked in Question 12 how much reading they had undertaken prior to coming to Australia. The results are presented in Table 12(a).

Table 12(a): How much reading did you do about university life in Australia before you came here

Response	Number	Percentage
A lot, quite a lot, or a reasonable amount	23	45.0
Not much/ None at all	28	54.9
Total	51	100.0

Student responses in Table 12(a) indicate that some 23 students (45%) had read ‘a lot’, ‘quite a lot’, or ‘a reasonable amount’ in preparation for their Australian educational experience and potentially regarding the institution of their subsequent enrollment. However, 28 individuals (54.9%) indicated that they had read ‘not much’ or ‘none at all’. Students were asked in Question 13(a) if their reading had helped them prepare for university study in Australia. The results are reported in Table 13(a).

Table 13(a): Did your reading help you prepare for university study here

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	31.3
No	24	47.0
No Response	11	21.5
Total	51	100.0

In Table 13(a) results reveal that some 16 respondents (31.3%) felt that their reading had helped them prepare for university in Australia; 24 students (47%) however indicated that their reading had not assisted them. Eleven (21.59%) did not respond to the question. Results in Table 13(b) cover the reasons given by the students for having read and why the reading had, or had not, helped them.

Only 8 students (21.6%) indicated in Table 13(b) that they had read to learn about university life in Australia. A further 4 students (10.8%) indicated that they had read to learn about different institutions and to differentiate between these, however no information was advanced regarding the decision-making process. In total just 12 students indicated that they had read for reasons connected to preparing for their enrollment and study in Australia. A further 7 students, (18.91%) indicated that they had read to assist their reading skills, thus potentially aiming to enhance both their reading ability and vocabulary. The subject matter of their reading is unknown however. Three further students (8.1%) commented that they had been unable to source the information they had required. Given the dearth of information available in Japan regarding the Australian tertiary education sector, outside of commercial agents and Australian Education International based in the Australian Embassy, this is not perhaps unexpected. Four respondents (10.8%) commented that reading was of no use, pointing out that the experience was personal. This conclusion may have been derived from personal experience. Two students (5.4%) had received information after arrival, with a further 2 students (5.4%) commenting that their reading was unrelated to study. Seven students (18.9%) maintained that they had read nothing in preparation. The questionnaire did not ask the students specifically what they had read and why they had read that specific text. This was a flaw in the questionnaire but the length of the questionnaire was a problem and recognized as such in its design. Further research is needed to clarify this issue of exactly what was read.

Table 13(b): Students’ reasons for having read and why the reading had/had not helped

Response	Number	Percentage
To learn about university life	8	21.6
Reading to assist reading / Vocabulary and English	7	18.9
No / little reading preparation	7	18.9
To differentiate between universities and to learn about specific institutions	4	10.8
Reading is no use – experience is personal	4	10.8
Couldn’t find the information required	3	8.1
Reading unrelated to study	2	5.4
Received information after arrival into Australia	2	5.4
No response	14	37.8
Total	51	100.0

Section Three: You in Japan

Academic performance in Japan

Question 14(a) asked the students to rank themselves as to how they had seen themselves as students in their home country. Table 14 (a) reports their responses. Although the total number of responses reveal that some students placed themselves in more than one category, in Table 14 (a) 7 students (11.8%), indicated that they had seen themselves as a ‘very good student’, with 18 students (30.5%) seeing themselves as a ‘good’ student. Given the fact that a sizeable proportion of the sample was postgraduate one might have expected more ranking themselves as ‘good students’, even allowing for Japanese reticence and disdain for boasting. Here in Australia however, being a ‘very good student’ may require a different set of strategies to achieve the desired goals, strategies that the students may have not yet become aware of and once they do, may not be able to immediately implement. The majority of students however, 30 respondents (50.7%) maintained that they were an ‘average’ or ‘below average’ student. Four (6.7%) identified themselves as ‘a poor student’, and it is entirely possible that enrollment at an

Australian university was a genuine second chance after failure at home for these students, although respondents were not asked such a personal question.

Table 14(a): How the students had seen themselves as a student in Japan

View of self	Number	Percentage
Very good student	7	11.8
Good student	18	30.5
An average student	25	42.3
A below average student	5	8.4
A poor student	4	6.7
Total	59	100.0

The concept of being an ‘average’ student was explored further in the semi-structured interview. Student #90 indicated that identifying oneself in this way was due to the fear of failure since there was kudos in studying overseas. Student #56 however commented that either the student/s genuinely did not know, or were being modest and explained that ‘average’ meant, (i) not wishing to stand out in a crowd, (ii) at the bottom but saying average to feel good, (iii) at the top but says average as a sign of modesty, or (iv) is telling the truth – they really are an average student.

To *gambaru*, that is to do one’s best, is important in Japan and Question 14(b i) in its following parts asked the students to rank the importance to them in Japan of a range of specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes in a range of academic situations. Tables 14(bi-bix) reports the results covering: 14 (b i) The importance of studying hard in class; 14(b ii), attending cram school (*juku*) for better marks; 14(b iii) Asking for help from senior students when required; 14(b iv) trying to please my parents; 14(b v) responding to ‘I always had good marks in tests; 14(b vi) trying to balance studies and social life; 14(b vii) always doing my best; 14(vii) recognizing that I was good at some things but not at others; and 14(b ix) being able to help younger students both educationally and socially.

Table 14(b i) reports results to the question requiring a response to: ‘The importance of studying hard in class’. Eight students (9.8%) felt that this was quite or reasonably important with 1 respondent indicating that this was not very or not important at all. Forty two students (82.3%) did not respond to this question. This may be due to their having not yet ‘placed’ themselves in the Australian tertiary environment. Student #56’s comment cited earlier, regarding the

importance of maintaining modesty and not standing out within the group, is potentially reflected in the results of this question. None of the students maintained that to them, the importance of studying hard in class was very important, despite a not insignificant number of students having attended *juku* to improve their marks (see below). However, it is quite possible that the students interpreted the given statement literally, that is only ‘in class’, in which case this may indicate a general lack of understanding of what is required for academic success in Australian universities.

Table 14(b i): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: The importance of studying hard in class

Rating	Number	Percentage
Quite or reasonably important	8	9.8
Not very important or not important at all.	1	1.9
No response	42	82.3
Total	51	100.0

Results presented in Table 14(b ii) indicate that 19 students (37.2%) believed that going to a cram school for better marks was very, quite or reasonably important. This may be interpreted in a number of ways. These students have been extolled to *gambaru*, to do their best throughout their education. As discussed in Chapter 2, attending a cram school is the norm in Japan for numbers of students wishing to succeed on the ‘educational escalator’, and the students themselves may have had no say in their attendance. The 28 students (54.8%) indicating that going to *juku* was not very important, or not important at all, may have been commenting upon the impact on their Australian tertiary program, or of studying in a cram school in Japan.

Table 14(b ii): The importance given by the students to specific study/educational/ socio-cultural attributes: I went to a cram school (*juku*) for better marks

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	19	37.2
Not very important	14	27.4
Not important at all	14	27.4
No response	4	7.8
Total	51	100.0

The *sempai/kohai* relationship [refer Table 7(e) above], particularly as pertaining to support from senior students, is generally seen in literature as important in Japan, and has been commented upon by a number of students participating in this research as an expectation in Australia (see below). The responses to Question 14(b iii) which asked about asking for help from senior students indicate in Table 14(biii) that 18 respondents (35.3%) considered it very, quite or reasonably important. However, it was not considered as very important or not important at all 27 (52.9%), a majority of the 45 responding students. On this basis there would seem to be social changes occurring in Japan and/or this value is not as important as previously considered. These findings could be attributed to concern regarding the potential loss of ‘face’ (if only to self) should the student ask for similar assistance in Australia. It is also possible these responses may have come from the postgraduate students and who were potentially more familiar with the university world, albeit not necessarily the Australian tertiary sector, and who do not see this applying to them. [See also results in Table 14 (b ix) below regarding value of this relationship.]

Table 14(b iii): The importance given by the students to specific study/educational/ socio-cultural attributes: I asked for help from senior students when I needed it

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	18	35.3
Not very or not important at all	27	52.9
No response	6	11.7
Total	51	100.00

Question 14(b iv) pertained to the role played by parents in the educational experience, which cannot be underestimated, particularly the role of the student’s mother. Results, presented in Table 14(b iv) indicate that 23 (45.0%) of respondents considered ‘I tried to please my parents’ as very, quite or reasonably important, but 25 (49.0%) considered that this was not very important or not important at all. These results would seem to suggest a shift in Japanese values as would responses to the previous Question 14(biii).

Table 14(b iv): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I tried to please my parents

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	23	45.0
Not very important or not important at all	25	49.0
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

Table 14(b v): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I always had good marks in tests

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	35	68.6
Not very or not important at all	11	21.5
No response	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

Question 14(b v) asked students the importance of always having good marks in tests. Results in Table 14(b v) indicate that for 35 students (68.6%) ‘I always had good marks in tests’ was very, quite or reasonably important, with a further 11 respondents (21.5%) indicating that this was not very important or not important at all. When considering earlier responses relating to cram school attendance for better marks, and doing one’s best in class, the responses to this question demonstrate the importance of attaining those marks. The student has been seen to be doing their best and expending ‘effort’, and good marks in tests reward the individual. Without having good

marks in tests, students are unlikely to be in a position to enter the university of their choice, and will be viewed as someone who does not, or cannot *gambaru*.

Students were asked in Question 14(b vi) how important it had been to them to balance their studies and social life in Japan. Table 14(b vi) reports the results. Forty students (78.4%) indicated that trying to balance their studies and social life was very, quite or reasonably important. To 8 students (15.6%) however it was not very or not important at all. It is probable that most of the students responding to this questionnaire would expect to maintain that balance here in Australia. Achieving that balance in a different educational environment may be problematic due to differing expectations. The question did not ask the students which had been more important, their high school studies, university studies or their social life. This was a weakness in the questionnaire.

Table 14(b vi): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I tried to balance my studies and social life

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	40	78.4
Not very or not important at all	8	15.6
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

In Question 14(b vi) students were asked the importance of always doing their best. The results are reported in Table 14(b vii). That 44 respondents, (86.2%) indicated that 'I always did my best' was very, quite or reasonably important in Table 14(b vii), with only 5 (9.8%) indicating that it was not very or not at all important, suggests that this socio-cultural attribute is still an important aspect of the Japanese educational world and in Japanese society more generally. However when a student is expected to always *gambaru*, it is important to recognize that not everyone is good at everything. Question 14(b viii) asked the students if they were able to recognize this, with Table 14(b viii) reporting the results.

Table 14(b vii): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I always did my best

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite, or reasonably important	44	86.2
Not very or not important at all	5	9.8
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 14(b viii): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I recognized that I was good at some things but not at others

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	40	78.4
Not very or not important at all	8	15.6
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

The results reported in Table 14(b viii) demonstrate that the importance of *gambaru* is still relevant. Some 40 students (78.4%) felt that this socio-cultural attribute was very, quite or reasonably important, with only eight students (15.6%) finding it not very or not important at all.

The *sempai/kohai* (senior/junior) relationship is generally considered important with Question 14(b ix) exploring this theme further. Results to the question relating to the ability to help younger students both educationally and socially are reported in Table 14(b ix). The importance of this socio-cultural attribute is demonstrated by the 35 participants (68.6%) indicating that this was reasonably, quite or very important with only 11 (21.5%) indicating that it was not very or not at all important. The comparison with the results obtained regarding approaching seniors in Table 14(b iii) is interesting. In that set of results (see above) a reasonable proportion rejected the notion of approaching a senior, but here a higher proportion acknowledge that helping a junior is important. Perhaps there are cultural attitudes relating to giving being more important than

receiving also acting in relation to these results, or possibly the difficulty of finding a senior who was approachable in the Australian setting.

Table 14(b ix): The importance given by the students to specific study/ educational/socio-cultural attributes: I was able to help younger students both educationally and socially

Rating	Number	Percentage
Very, quite or reasonably important	35	68.6
Not very or not important at all	11	21.5
No response	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

The responses provided to the nine questions/statements in Tables 14(b i-ix) (see above) aimed to explore how the participants had seen themselves as students in Japan. It was important therefore to ascertain whether or not they expected to function as students in Australia in the same way, thus placing themselves in similar categories. If they did not expect to perform in the same way, then this was also important, and the students therefore were asked to speculate why they thought that this would be the case. Question 14(c) asked respondents if they thought that they would be in the same category in Australia. Results are reported in Table 14(c).

Table 14(c): Do you expect to be in the same category in Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	31.3
No	21	41.1
No response	14	27.4
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 14(c) reveal that 16 students (32.3%) felt that they would place themselves in the same category in Australia as they had placed themselves in Japan. Twenty one students (41.1%) felt that they would not. However, a not insignificant number, 14 students (27.4%), did not respond to this question. This may relate to saving 'face', or it might be that the students did not yet fully understand the Australian educational system and associated expectations, and thus

not knowing where to place themselves, did not respond. Subsequently the students were then asked to comment upon why they felt that this would be so, that is to justify their position or judgment, with the responses of those expecting to be the same with results reported in Table 14(d).

Table 14(d): Cohort A: Those who expect to be the same in Australia

Reason	Number	Percentage from cohort 'the same'
This is the way I am	12	66.6
I want to balance study and play	2	11.1
I expect study to be the same	2	11.1
Due to financial outlay [the need to do one's best]	1	5.5
I don't know	1	5.5
Total	18	100.0

Twelve students appear to have felt that, despite their being in a different educational system, in a different country, studying in a language that was not their own, there would be no change in their way of studying. This however, may also be linked to both the assumed familiarity with Australia demonstrated by multiple visits made by some students, and by the apparent lack of access to information regarding the Australian educational system prior to enrollment, and thus, some students being ill-informed. It should be noted that only 18 students responded to this question. The low response rate may suggest that students were 'saving face' to self by not responding, or because of the timing of the questionnaire in the early stages of their study, could genuinely not provide an answer or conceive of there being another way of studying.

Results in Table 14(e) pertain to Cohort B, those respondents who were not expecting their tertiary experience in Australia to be the same as in Japan. Table 14 (e) reveals that the 20 respondents to this question, did not expect study in Australia to be the same as in Japan. A range of responses were revealed, however while a variety of reasons emerged it is somewhat difficult to ascertain patterns, but at least 12 were aware of the problem of different cultural expectations/cultural differences.

Table 14(e): Cohort B: Those not expecting the same

Reason	Number	Percentage from cohort 'not the same'
To do better than in Japan	6	30.0
Because of language issues	4	20.0
Because of difference	8	40.0
Grown up think differently	2	10.0
Total	20	100.0

Students were asked in Question 14(f) who they had received help from in high school. Table 14(f) reveals who had provided assistance. Students were able to provide multiple responses for this question, with 33 responses (34.3%) indicating in Table 14(f) that assistance had been provided by classmates, and with 28 (29.1%) having received help from teachers. A further 19 responses (19.7%) indicated assistance from their parents. These results overall indicate the importance of the group, that is students supporting each other, and also the important role that the family plays in education.

Table 14(f): Who the students had received help from in high school

Source of help	Number	Percentage
Parents	19	19.7
Classmates	33	34.3
Teachers	28	29.1
Older students	7	7.2
Someone else	9	9.3
Total	96	100.0

Students were asked who that 'someone else' had been if they had nominated this category with results in Table 14(g) in Appendix C indicating who that someone else had been. Various responses were obtained with no consistent pattern evident. The *kohai/sem pai* relationship was referred to by a number of students regarding the support they expect to receive from older students here in Australia. However in terms of who had provided support and assistance in Japan at high school, only three students identified older students. This additional evidence

would suggest that the *sempai/kohai* relationship might be less important than the literature suggested, or possibly undergoing some forms of change, or more complex in ways that the researcher could not determine from this research. [See Tables 14(b iii) and 14(b ix) above for additional evidence regarding changes. Also refer to the Appendices C and D for further information on this issue.]

Much of the guidance and support to students typically comes through a teacher. Results in Table 14(h) reveal the form of support provided to the students by their teachers in response to the questions about sources of support in Question 14(e). These indicate that, for 23 of the 28 respondents (82.1%), the support provided by teachers was educational in nature. Three students (10.7%) indicated that they had received emotional and/or motivational support, however no further details were supplied. The form of educational support provided by teachers is important. Table 14(i) presents a more specific break-down of the type/s of support received by the students, categorized by the researcher from comments made by the responding students in response to the request for information on how the person they had nominated helped them.

Table 14 (h): The form of support provided by teachers

Type of support	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Educational	23	82.1
Emotional /motivational	3	10.7
No response	2	7.1
Total	28	100.0

Students were able to provide multiple responses to this question, where Table 14(i) presents the types of support available to students from their teachers during regular classes. Seven students (25.9%) indicated that their teachers had ‘Talked about homework or studies’. Whereas this is typically the role of the teacher, there is also the suggestion that teachers assisted students out of class time, with 4 students (14.8%) indicating that: ‘They studied with me and taught me until I understood what I didn’t’. After hours support cannot however be confirmed. Only 1 student clearly indicated that teachers had provided ‘Help out of class time’. However, when considering the role that teachers play in the students’ educational pathway, it is important to remember that typically the success of a high school is measured by the universities that its graduates gain entry to. [Refer to Table 14(j) in the appendices for information and examples of the emotional or

motivational support that students indicated had been provided by their teachers. Also refer to Chapter 2 for further information on this issue.]

Table 14(i): Examples of the educational support provided by teachers

Comment	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Talked about homework / studies	7	25.9
They studied with me and taught me until I understood what I didn't.	4	14.8
Gave advice	4	14.8
Academic support	4	14.8
Provided information /tips	4	14.8
Giving Lectures / consulting	3	11.1
Help out of class time	1	3.7
Total	27	100.0

Attending a *juku* (cram school) to prepare better for the university entrance examination is common in Japan. While question 14(b ii) had touched on general issues regarding the importance of cram school, Question 15(a) explored specifically how many students had studied in a *juku*. Table 15(a) reports the results. Results in Table 15(a) indicate that some 28 students, (58.9%) indicated that they had studied in such an institution. Twenty students (39.2%) had not attended a *juku*. Given that almost 60% of students had studied in a *juku*, it was important to ascertain how many of the students felt that attending a *juku* had helped them prepare for study in Australia. The results to this question are presented in Table 15(b).

Table 15(a): Students who had undertaken study in a *juku*

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	28	58.9
No	20	39.2
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

Table 15(b): Students who felt that attending *juku* had helped them prepare for study in Australia

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	15.6
No	21	41.1
No response	22	43.1
Total	51	100.0

Results in table 15(b), in response to the question regarding *juku* attendance and whether it had helped in preparing students for study in Australia, indicate, that of the 28 students who had attended a *juku*, only 8 respondents (15.6%), felt that this had helped them prepare for study here. A further 21 individuals (41.1%) felt that *juku* attendance had not helped them prepare for entry to university in Australia. Twenty two students (43.1%) did not respond to this question. This may indicate that at this early stage they did not know the degree to which *juku* attendance may (or may not) assist them in Australia. [Refer to Tables 15(c) and 15(d) in the Appendix C for ways in which the students thought that attending a *juku* had helped them prepare for study in Australia, and had indirectly resulted in their studying in Australia. No discernable patterns are evident in these results.] An awareness of reasons that attending a *juku* may not directly help the students prepare for study in Australia was explored with the results presented in Table 15(e).

Table 15(e): Reasons that students who had attended *juku* felt that it had not directly helped them prepare for studying in Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Subject area is different	2	6.0
Study method is different	23	69.6
Went for junior or senior high school preparation	7	21.2
Not spoken English	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

It is important to note that, of the results in Table 15(f), some 23 students (69.9%), commented that their attendance at *juku* had not helped them prepare for study in Australia since the ‘Study

method is different'. This may suggest an awareness of the way/s in which academic study in Australia differs to that Japan, although at the time of the research, at the commencement of the participants' first semester, not yet well understood.

Students were asked if having not studied in a *juku* would benefit their studies in Australia or not. Table 15(f) reports their responses. Results in Table 15(f) reveal that 60% of respondents, 12 students, felt that their studies in Australia would benefit by having not studied in a *juku* in Japan. This may suggest that there is some recognition that the teaching and learning style in such institutions, that is surface learning with a specific goal in mind, would or could potentially be detrimental to the form of academic study required in an Australian university, even though at the time of the research, academic requirements in Australia may not be fully understood.

Table 15(f): Thoughts from students who had not attended a *juku* regarding whether their studies in Australian would benefit or suffer

Response	Number	Percentage
Benefit Yes	12	60.0
Benefit No	1	5.0
Suffer Yes	6	30.0
Suffer No	1	5.0
Total	20	100.00

Expectations regarding leisure time

Japanese students coming to Australia for academic study are leaving their social and support networks in Japan. Students were asked in Question 16(a) 'In Japan, who did you spend most of your time with when not in school /university?'. It is perhaps important to understand previous patterns in order to cater for expectations in the new environment. Table 16(a) reports their answers with multiple responses possible.

Table 16(a): Who students spent most of their time with in Japan when not in school /university

Examples	Number	Percentage
Self	32	20.2
A friend the same age	41	25.9
An older friend	18	11.3
A younger friend	1	0.63
Classmates from school / university	28	17.7
Family	16	10.1
Club members from university	18	11.3
A teacher, or someone to look up to	3	1.8
Someone else – who?	1 (Girlfriend)	0.6
The person / people I live with	0	0
Total	158	100.0

Forty one responses (25.9%) indicated that they would spend this time with a friend of the same age in Table 16(a). A further 32 responses (20.2%) indicated that they would spend their non-study time alone. Some 28 responses (17.7%) commented that they would spend this time with classmates from school or university. An additional 18 responses (11.3%) indicated that they would spend this time with club members from university. Some 18 responses (11.3%) commented that they would spend this time with an older friend. Sixteen responses (10.1%) cited their family, with 1 respondent commenting that he/she would spend this time with someone else, nominating ‘girlfriend’. There is some evidence in these finding of the importance of ‘the group’ regarding classmates from university and club activities.

Question 16(b) asked, ‘Who do you expect to spend most of your time with in Australia when not in school/university?’ In Table 16(b) the results indicate an expectation of similar behaviour in Australia as in Japan is evidenced by 24 responses (16.6%) demonstrating an expectation of spending time with classmates, with a further 6 (4.1%) indicating that they would spend time with club members from university, thus an expectation held by some 30 students (20.7%) of spending free time with classmates and club members in Australia.

Table 16(b): Who students expect to spend most of their time with in Australia

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Self	40	27.7
A friend the same age	18	12.5
An older friend	19	13.1
A younger friend	1	0.6
Classmates from school/ university	24	16.6
Family	3	2.0
Club members from university	6	4.1
A teacher, or someone to look up to	3	1.8
Someone else – who? Girlfriend	0	0
Australian students	9	6.2
The person / people I live with	24	16.6
Total	144	100.0

Some 18 responses (11.3%) in Table 16(a) indicated that some students had spent their free time with an older friend in Japan, with 19 responses (13.1%) indicating in Table 16(b) an expectation of this in Australia. This may relate to the expectation of having a *kohai* (senior), or they may relate to possible emotional relationships/partnerships, but the figures are small and must be interpreted tentatively. None of the students indicated that in Japan they would spend time with the people that they lived with in Table 16(a), contrasting with the 24 students (16.6%) who held this expectation in Australia in Table 16 (b). This may relate to students living at home in Japan, but potentially with other students in Australia. Some 32 students (20.2%) indicated that they spent their time alone in Japan. The figure for those expecting to spend their time alone in Australia however, 40 responses (27.7%), may reflect the timing of the questionnaire being sent to the students soon after enrollment, prior to social networks having been established.

How the students described themselves

It was important to explore how the students viewed themselves and their confidence as regards their participation in the Australian learning environment which often requires active

participation in contrast with the Japanese traditional approaches to learning (see Chapter 2). Questions 17(a i-iv) explored how the students would describe themselves in terms of their confidence. Students were asked to respond to given statements covering: 17(a i) Confident, I say what I think; 17(a ii) Shy, not comfortable saying what I think in public; 17(a iii) Quiet, I prefer to listen and not necessarily participate in discussion; and 17(a iv) I am outgoing and like to lead discussion.

Table 17(a i): How the students described self: Confident, I say what I think

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	19	37.2
No	24	47.0
Neither yes or no	1	1.9
No response	7	13.7
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 17(a i) reveal that 19 students (37.2%) indicated that ‘yes’, they were confident, ‘and said what they thought’, with 24 students (47%) saying ‘no’ they were not confident and ‘did not say what they thought’. Results in Table 17(a ii) appear to confirm those above in Table 17(a i) that some 26 students, just over half the cohort (50.9%), indicated that they were shy and uncomfortable saying what they thought in public. Seventeen students (33.3%) however did not describe themselves in this way.

Table 17(a ii): How the students described self: Shy, not comfortable saying what I think in public

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	50.9
No	17	33.3
No response	8	15.6
Total	51	100.0

Table 17(a iii): How the students described self: Quiet, I prefer to listen and not necessarily participate in discussion

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes agree	21	41.1
No disagree	21	41.1
No response	9	17.6
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 17(a iii) indicate that 21 (41.1%) described themselves as ‘quiet, I prefer to listen and not necessarily participate in discussion’ saying what they thought in public’. Equal numbers, 21 students, disagreed with this however and in Table17 (a iv), 16 students (31.3%) appear to suggest that they are outgoing and like to lead discussion. A smaller number of students than indicated in Table 17 (a iii), now appear to suggest that they are outgoing and like to lead discussion. Nine students (17.6%) did not respond to this question and may have been saving ‘face’. It is important to recall that in the Japanese educational system, there is typically little or no student participation (see Chapter 2 and also discussion in Chapter 5).

Table 17(a iv): How the students described self: I am outgoing and like to lead discussion

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes agree	16	31.3
No disagree	25	49.0
Neither yes or no	1	1.9
No response	9	17.6
Total	51	100.0

When the results are considered together:

Table 17(a i) reveals that 24 respondents (47%) are not confident saying what they think;

Table 17(a ii) reveals that some 26 respondents (50.9%) are shy and not comfortable saying what they think in public;

Table 17(a iii) reveals that some 21 students (41.1%) prefer to listen and not necessarily participate in discussion (although a further 21 students (41.1%) indicated that they were happy to participate in discussion); and

Table 17(a iv) indicates that that 25 respondents commented that they were not outgoing and did not like to lead discussion.

These results indicate a trend to non-participatory study, or of reticence regarding class participation. Approximately half of the respondents consistently indicated traits somewhat at odds with Australian ideals/goals for learning. This finding was expected given the non-participatory teaching and learning style in the Japanese educational system. The very real culturally determined differences between the two educational systems are highlighted along with potential problems for students with erroneous expectations regarding the role that they are to play in their own learning process in Australia. Given the potential negative implications for the students' effective learning through not actively participating in the Australian academic context, this is worthy of further, more detailed research. Accepting institutions need to consider non-threatening support systems focusing on targeted skill development with specific groups of students to help overcome the problems of culturally different and deeply ingrained educational ideals.

Impacts upon learning

Students were asked in Question 17(b) if they thought that their view of themselves would impact on their learning in light of the way that they had responded to Question 17(a). Table 17(b) presents the results.

Table 17(b): Do you think that your view of yourself will impact upon your learning in Australia

Comment	Number	Percentage
It will affect my learning	43	84.3
It will not affect my learning	3	5.8
No response	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 17(b) indicate 43 respondents (84.3%) were aware of the potential impact upon their learning of their view of themselves. However, it is unknown whether this impact was

viewed as being positive or negative. This aspect of the question could be re-phrased in further research. Only 3 students (5.8%) indicated that their view of self would not affect their learning. Five students (9.8%) did not respond to this question. This may indicate that they genuinely did not know, or were saving face by not responding.

Students were also able to provide a textual response to this question with the following comments providing insights:

‘Yes slightly but I know my character varies with the case so I don’t know’ (Student #3)

‘Yes it is just the feeling of being inferior that makes me withdrawn and prefer not to say in public’. (Student # 51).

Question 17(c) in the questionnaire asked participants specifically whether their view of themselves would have little, some or little impact on their learning. Table 17(c) presents the results.

Table 17 (c): The impact of the students’ view of themselves on their learning

Comment	Number	Percentage
There will be little impact upon my learning.	43	79.6
There will be a great effect on my learning.	7	12.9
There will be some effect on my learning.	4	7.4
Total	54	100.0

From Table 17(c), with multiple responses possible, results reveal that 43 students (79.6%) felt that there would be little impact upon their learning due to their view of themselves. A further 7 students (12.9%) agreed that ‘There will be a great effect on my learning’ due to their view of themselves, with 4 students (7.4%), feeling that ‘There will be some effect on my learning’.

Examples of comments made by the students included:

‘Yes [there will be an impact] because you need to be much more vocal in this countries learning. I’m having a hard time’. (Student #31)

‘Discussion! To have and to be able to voice your own view is the most big difference and difficulty for me in Australia.’ (Student#18)

'Yes in Australia I realized that it is important to participate in discussion and clear my opinion.' (Student #36)

'In Australia you are expected to speak and tell your opinions in the class but in Japan we just sit and take notes in the class. When speaking English is hard enough telling your opinion is unbelievably difficult.' (Student#21)

'Discussion with classmates, if I feel that the other person is unacceptable, still I don't know how I can demonstrate that kind of feeling. (Maybe should not demonstrate that kind of feeling, but I sometimes would like to as far as keeping politeness).' (Student#3)

'In Japan uni doesn't usually have tutorial classes. Besides although there's an assignment like 'report' but isn't an 'essay'. Therefore studying here requires us to 'think' which Japanese don't get used to'. (Student#25).

The examples cited, some of which point out some of the very real differences between the two educational and socio-cultural systems and their expectations, may suggest that the students are aware of the need to *gambaru* in their Australian tertiary program, although lacking a deeper understanding regarding the educational and socio-cultural expectations of the two countries. The strategies that have been successful in the Japanese education scenario, often memorizing and rote learning, may not be effective in the Australian educational environment and this may not always result in success, (refer Chapter 5). Some of the comments do appear to hint at a perceived link or relationship between how the students' view themselves and the way in which effort is expended, that is how well they *gambaru*. However the real issue is more related to the way in which the students implement *gambaru* in their studies in Australia.

Other miscellaneous reasons linked to the students' view of themselves, categorized by the researcher, with potential to impact on the students' learning are reported in Table 17(d). These miscellaneous reasons, although with low response rates, are important since they appear to demonstrate the difficulty faced by the students due to socio-cultural differences in the learning environment. The 'For no particular reason' category lacked specificity in comments but many of these revealed a sense of unease and concern as might be expected by students adapting to a new and different culture. Given that the majority of respondents some 19 students, (69.5%), indicated 'For no particular reason' could suggest an awareness of the existence of a potential problem, as yet not fully understood due to the timing of the questionnaire being completed, or related to effective learning strategies being as yet unidentified.

Table 17 (d): Other given reasons

Area	Number	Percentage
Related to the role of the academic	1	4.4
Unsure of the implications of speaking out	2	8.6
Because of other students being more outgoing	1	4.3
For no particular reason	19	69.5
Total	23	100.0

Question 17(c) in the questionnaire asked respondents how/why they thought their views of themselves would have a positive or negative effect on their learning. Results for categorization into positive and negative effects are presented in Table 17(e) with further refinement involving specific issues presented in Table 17(f).

Table 17(e): Student thoughts regarding the positive/negative impact upon their learning due to their view of self

Area	Number	Percentage
Positive	22	43.1
Negative	24	47.0
No Response	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 17(e) indicate that some 22 students, (43.1%) felt that the impact upon their learning due to their view of themselves would be a positive one, with 24 students (47.0%) indicating that the impact would be a negative one. Results in Table 17(f) indicate specifically the areas where the students identified concerns. Students could provide multiple responses to this question. The results in Table 17(f) reveal that some 17 students (33.3%) indicated that they were uncomfortable with the Australian teaching style. A further 5 students (9.8%) expressed concerns regarding their English language ability, with 10 students (19.6%) expressing concerns due to 'cultural differences' and 'difficult responses'. Five students (9.8%) held concerns regarding the way others may think of the student or their response. Four students commented

that they ‘cannot gain academically’, which may suggest that no matter how hard they feel they are studying, or *gambaru* they cannot see academic progress being made.

Table 17(f): Categories of students’ responses regarding why they felt that their learning in Australia would be impacted upon negatively through their view of themselves

Area	Number	Percentage
Not comfortable with the teaching style	17	33.3
Cultural difference / difficult responses	10	19.6
Personality related	7	13.7
Concern regarding English language ability	5	9.8
Concern regarding the way others may think	5	9.8
Cannot gain academically	4	7.8
Too difficult	1	1.9
Non committal	1	1.9
No response	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Ease and difficulty of specific learning/study skills

Australian learning and study skill expectations are generally different to those in Japan. Participants were asked in Question 18 to rank how easy or difficult a range of academic requirements or study skills might be from three given statements ‘very or quite difficult’, ‘not particularly difficult’ or ‘quite easy or very easy’. Tables 18(a i-xv) report the results. Typically, in these questions it appears ‘face’ has been saved by not responding. However it may be that in the results to the various Tables 18 that ‘face’ is also being saved by indicating that the study skill is quite or very easy.

Results in Table 18(a i) reveal that for 24 students (38.7%), listening to and understanding lectures was very or quite difficult, with a further 21 respondents (33.8%) indicated that this was not particularly difficult. Conversely, 17 students (27.4%) maintained that they found this to be quite or very easy. The lecture environment in Japan is very different to that in Australia thus these results may indicated that ‘face’ was being saved by some students when commenting that

listening to and understanding lectures was not particularly difficult. This may also be the case with the 17 students indicating that it was quite or very easy. However, the students may indeed have found understanding lectures not particularly difficult, or quite or very easy. Unfortunately it was beyond the scope of the study to correlate statements of difficulty with the actual academic results obtained and also the study was unable to determine the actual English language and study/learning skill proficiency levels of individual students.

Table 18(a i): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Listening to and understanding lectures

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	24	38.7
Not particularly difficult	21	33.8
Quite easy or very easy	17	27.4
Total	62	100.0

Results in Table 18(a ii) reveal that some 24 students (48%) found note taking in lectures very, or quite difficult. This is to be expected when the lecture environment in a Japanese university differs greatly from that in Australia in both format and language of instruction. However results in Table 18(a ii) also reveal that 21 students (42%) maintained that this skill was not particularly difficult, with a further 5 students (10%) finding it quite or very easy. The need to relate actual performances to stated position in future research is instanced here.

Table 18(a ii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Note talking in lectures

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	24	48.0
Not particularly difficult	21	42.0
Quite or easy very easy	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 18(a iii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Reading for assignments

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	24	50.0
Not particularly difficult	16	33.3
Quite or very easy	8	16.6
Total	48	100.0

Findings in Table 18(a iii) indicate that some 24 students, 50% of respondents found reading for assignments very or quite difficult. Sixteen students however (33.3%) found this not particularly difficult. A further 8 students (16.6%) found this skill quite or very easy.

Table 18(a iv): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Writing assignments

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	38	76.0
Not particularly difficult	9	18.0
Quite or very easy	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Results in Table 18(a iv) indicate that some 38 students (76%) found the skill of writing assignments very or quite difficult, with a further 9 students (18%) considering it to be not particularly difficult. For 3 students (6%) it was quite or very easy. There is the possibility that students received assistance and support in writing assignments from other students or a university provided support network, although this cannot be confirmed given the limitations of this exploratory research.

Table 18(a v): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Asking questions in tutorials

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	24	48.9
Not particularly difficult	16	32.6
Quite or very easy	9	18.3
Total	49	100.0

Table 18(a v) indicates that 24 individuals (48.9%) maintained that they found asking questions in tutorials very or quite difficult. There was no data however to determine whether this was a linguistic or comprehension-based issue. Sixteen further students (32.6%) however maintained that they found this not particularly difficult, 9 (18.3%) indicating that this skill was quite or very easy.

Results in Table 18(a vi) reveal that 31 students (63.2%) found discussing studies with Australian students to be very or quite difficult. A further 13 students (26.5%) found this to be not particularly difficult. Five students, (10.2%) indicated that this was in fact quite or very easy. These last two results may be related to the establishment of effective friendship networks.

Table 18(a vi): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes. Discussing studies with Australian Students

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	31	63.2
Not particularly difficult	13	26.5
Quite or very easy	5	10.2
Total	49	100.0

Table 18(a vii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Talking to lecturers

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	13	27.0
Not particularly difficult	24	50.0
Quite or very easy	11	22.9
Total	48	100.0

Results in Table 18(a vii) reveal that some 13 respondents (27.0%) found talking to lecturers to be very or quite difficult, despite comments made in both the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire regarding positive relationships where this was not seen as problematic. This more positive position is largely reinforced by results that indicate for 24 students (50%) talking to lecturers was not particularly difficult, with 11 students (22.0%) indicating that this was quite or very easy. It is possible that as the majority of respondents were postgraduate students they may have had more confidence than undergraduate students who might be less practised in and hence more hesitant about talking to academic staff. Further, this may be particularly true of those postgraduate students undertaking a research degree. Additional analyses of data based on postgraduate and undergraduate status are reported in Chapter 5.

Table 18(a viii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Finding information in the library

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	10	21.2
Not particularly difficult	16	34.0
Quite or very easy	21	44.6
Total	47	100.0

Results in Table 18(a viii) indicate that 10 students (21.2%) found finding information in the library very or quite difficult, with a further 16 students (34.9%) finding it not particularly difficult. These findings may relate to the difference between surfing the net for personal reasons

and for academic purposes and differences between using Japanese and English. Twenty one students (44.6%) however found this quite or very easy. Results in Table 18(a ix) reveal that 33 students (70.2%) found using the internet to be quite or very easy, with 9 (19.1%) finding this skill to be not particularly difficult. However the results indicate that 5 students (10.6%) found using the internet very or quite difficult. Given the almost world wide presence of the internet, it is perhaps somewhat surprising that some Japanese students of this generation find using the internet difficult, particularly when Japan is seen as a leading nation in technology.

Table 18(a ix): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Using the internet

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	5	10.6
Not particularly difficult	9	19.1
Quite or very easy	33	70.2
Total	47	100.0

Table 18(a x): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Group work

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	17	36.9
Not particularly difficult	20	43.4
Quite or very easy	9	19.5
Total	46	100.0

Results in Table 18(a x) indicate that group work was identified as being very difficult or quite difficult by 17 respondents (36.9%), with a further 20 (43.4%) indicating that it was not particularly difficult. For nine students (19.5%), this skill was quite or very easy. Group work in the Australian academic setting is somewhat different to dependency upon the group in Japan, and the Japan students are unlikely to be accustomed to studying in this way. A further difficulty in the Australian environment is the need to both speak and study in English.

Table 18(a xi): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Understanding assignments

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	13	28.2
Not particularly difficult	17	36.9
Quite or very easy	16	34.7
Total	46	100.0

Results in Table 18(a xi) indicate that some 13 students (28.2%) found understanding assignments to be very or quite difficult, with a further 17 respondents (36.9%) finding this to be not particularly difficult. In addition, 16 students (34.7%) found this to be quite or very easy.

Results in Table 18(a xii) indicate that some 18 students (36.7%) maintained that understanding what lecturers mean was very or quite difficult, with a further 19 students (38.7%) indicating that this was not particularly difficult. Twelve students (24.4%) found this to be quite or very easy. However there are two possible interpretations of understanding what lecturers mean. The first is linguistic in nature, the second contextual, thus students could have been responding to either perspective. Further clarification will be necessary via future research.

Table 18(a xii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Understanding what lecturers mean

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	18	36.7
Not particularly difficult	19	38.7
Quite or very easy	12	24.4
Total	49	100.0

Results in Table 18(a xiii) indicate the ease or difficulty of developing a relationship with other students. The importance of the group cannot be underestimated in Japan, thus being able to develop a relationship with other students is critical. Thirteen students (27.6%) found this to be

very or quite difficult with a further 22 students (46.8) indicating that this was not particularly difficult. In addition, 12 students (25.5%) found this to be quite or very easy.

Table 18(a xiii): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Develop a relationship with other students

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	13	27.6
Not particularly difficult	22	46.8
Quite or very easy	12	25.5
Total	47	100.0

The results presented in Table 18(a xiv) indicate that developing a relationship with lecturers was found to be very or quite difficult for 20 students (43.4%), but not particularly difficult for 16 (34.7%). The 10 students (21.7%) who indicated that this was quite or very easy may have been postgraduate research students referring to the relationship with their supervisor.

Table 18(a xiv): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes. Develop a relationship with lecturers

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	20	43.4
Not particularly difficult	16	34.7
Quite or very easy	10	21.7
Total	46	100.0

Results in Table 18(a xv) indicate that explaining in English what you know in Japanese was very or quite difficult for 23 students (50%). A further thirteen students (28.2%) however maintained that this was not particularly difficult, while 10 (21.7%) found this to be quite or very easy. That 50% of respondents found this difficult would appear to point to a link between English language proficiency and problems in learning/study skills and perhaps lower levels of English language proficiency than would be desirable in tertiary studies.

Table 18(a xv): The ease or difficulty of specific study attributes: Explain in English what you know in Japanese

Ranking	Number	Percentage
Very or quite difficult	23	50.0
Not particularly difficult	13	28.2
Quite or very easy	10	21.7
Total	46	100.0

Not all students however completed all components of Question 18, and some students placed themselves in more than one category. When the results here are compared with many of the comments made by students where a textual response was required, it could be argued legitimately that the category ‘not particularly difficult’ was used by students who, despite the questionnaire being anonymous, could perhaps not acknowledge to themselves the difficulties that they were encountering. This belief is based upon the importance of saving ‘face’ – even to one’s self, and is linked with *honne* and *tatemae* (see Chapter 2). It must also be borne in mind that the same questionnaire was used for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The most difficult study attributes, that is those viewed as being very or quite difficult appear to be writing assignments, acknowledged by 38 students (76%), and discussing studies with Australian students indicated by 31 students (63.2%). In the same categories of very or quite difficult, reading for assignments was indicated by 23 students, (47.9%), listening to and understanding lectures by 22 (44.0%), and note taking in lectures by 24 students (48.9%). Generally speaking, responses in the various sections of Tables 18(a i-xv) appear to suggest that, prior to arrival, students may have not appreciated the differences and potential difficulty of both studying in a foreign language, and studying in an educational system that differs greatly to that in their home country.

Dealing with Australian academic staff

Question 19 explored the students’ expectations of their Australian academic staff. Tables 19(ai-vii) report the results.

Results in Table 19(a i), in response to the question of whether students expected lecturers to spend as much time as needed when they had a problem, indicate that, whereas 23 students (45%) did not expect their lecturers to spend as much time with them as needed when they had a

problem with their studies, a further 26 students (50.9%) did hold this expectation, thus demonstrating *amae* (dependency). (Refer to Chapter 5 for further discussion on what may be judged as unrealistic expectations in the Australian cultural context and the need to manage these.)

Table 19(a i): Do you expect your lecturers to spend as much time with you as needed when you have a problem with your studies

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	26	50.9
No Disagree	23	45.0
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 19(a ii) indicate that 17 students (33.3%) did not expect to be directed to help by their lecturers when they had a problem. A further 30 respondents however (58.8%), did hold the expectation of being directed to assistance. Four students did not respond, with this possibly saving ‘face’ to themselves regarding the need for support.

Table 19(a ii): Do you expect your lecturers to direct you to help when you have a problem

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	30	58.8
No Disagree	17	33.3
No response	4	7.8
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 19(a iii) indicate that some 29 respondents (56.8%) did not expect their academic staff to spend little time with them when they had a problem thus suggesting an expectation of time being spent with the student until the problem had been solved. This expectation reflects *amae* dependency upon their lecturer. Nineteen students however (37.2%) did not hold this expectation. The 3 students who did not respond (5.8%) may have been saving face, or had genuinely not known.

Table 19(a iii): Do you expect your lecturers to spend little time with you when you have a problem

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	19	37.2
No Disagree	29	56.8
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

Table 19(a iv): Do you expect your lecturers to be sympathetic because you are a non-native speaker of English

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	20	39.2
No Disagree	27	52.9
No response	4	7.8
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 19(a iv) indicate that, while 20 students (39.2%) expected academic staff to be sympathetic because they were a non-native speaker of English, a further 27 students (52.9%) did not hold this expectation. Four students did not respond to the question.

Table 19(a v): Do you expect your lecturers to arrange social events for students

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	18	35.2
No	30	58.8
No response	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 19(a v) indicate that whereas 30 students (58.8%) did not expect lecturers to arrange social events for students, 18 (35.2%) did. Three students (5.8%) did not respond.

The results in Table 19(a vi) indicate that although some 35 students did not expect academic staff to advise them on personal matters, 14 students (27.4%) did. This may reflect the students demonstrating *amae*.

Table 19(a vi): Do you expect your lecturers to advise you on personal matters

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	14	27.4
No Disagree	35	68.6
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Question 19(a vii): Do you expect your lecturers to be interested in you as a person

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	47.0
No	25	49.0
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Results presented in Table 19(a vii) indicate that some 24 students (47.0%) believed that academic staff would be interested in them as a person. However, an almost equal number, 25 students, (49%), did not think that this would be the case. This may relate to the expectations surrounding *zemi* in Japan.

Table 19(a viii): Do you expect your lecturers to be interested in Japan

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes Agree	23	45.0
No Disagree	26	50.9
No response	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 19(a viii) indicate that some 23 students (45.0%) expected their academic staff to be interested in Japan although a further 26 students (50.9%) did not hold this expectation.

Non-meeting of expectations

The impact of a student’s expectations not being met cannot be ignored since this has implications for mental health of students in a foreign culture, as well as provision of services involving counseling and guidance. Questions 19(bi-biii), in their various forms, explored the impact on the students confidence, academic study and attitude to Australia if their expectations were not met. It is important to recall that for many students, as indicated in Table 11(d) (see above), some 64 (65.3%) gave reasons pertaining to Australia the country itself when choosing when choosing Australia as a study destination, with only 29 reasons (29.5%) linked to education.

Table 19(b i): The impact upon on the student’s confidence academic study and attitude to Australia if their expectations are not met: Confidence

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	39.2
No	27	52.9
No response	4	7.8
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 19(b i) reveal that 20 students (39.2%) felt that there would be an impact on their confidence if their expectations were not met. However, a further 27 students (52.9%) did not think that this would be the case. Four students did not respond to the question.

Table 19(b ii): The impact upon on the student’s confidence, study and attitude to Australia if their expectations are not met: Academic study

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	49
No	16	31.3
No response	10	19.6
Total	51	100.0

The results in Table 19(b ii) indicate that 25 students (49.0%), felt that there would be some impact upon their academic study should their expectations not be met. However a further 16 students (31.3%) did not think that this would be the case. Ten students (19.6%) did not respond and may genuinely not have known or were saving ‘face’.

The results in Table 19(b iii) indicate that, whereas some 16 students (31.3%) felt that their feelings regarding Australia would be impacted upon if their expectations were met, for 26 respondents (50.9%) this would not be the case. Nine students (11.7%) did not respond, and may genuinely have not known.

Table 19(b iii): The impact upon on the student’s confidence, study and attitude to Australia if their expectations are not met: Feelings regarding Australia

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	31.3
No	26	50.9
No response	9	11.7
Total	51	100.0

The impact upon the students of their expectations being met was explored further in terms of positive, negative or no effect options. Table 19(c) provides the results. Students were able to provide multiple responses to this question with Table 19(c) revealing that some 33 students (64.7%) expected a positive effect upon their learning if their expectations were met. A further 3 students (5.8%) however anticipated a negative effect upon their learning. Four students (19.6%) did not expect any effect, while 11 (21.5%) did not respond to the question.

Table 19(c): The effect upon the students if their expectations are met

Response	Number	Percentage
Positive effect	33	64.7
Negative effect	3	5.8
No effect	4	19.6
No response	11	21.5
Total	51	100.0

Questions 20(a i) and 20(a ii) explored the students' expectations regarding interaction with non-Japanese students on campus. Tables 20(a i) and 20(a ii) report the results.

Table 20(a i): Expectations regarding other students: Do you expect non-Japanese students to initiate a conversation with you on campus

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	58.8
No	14	27.4
No response	7	13.7
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 20(a i) indicate that some 30 students (58.8%) did expect non-Japanese students to start a conversation with them on campus, with 14 students (27.4%) not holding this expectation. A further 7 students did not respond, and may genuinely have not known. Being approached by a non-Japanese student and initiating a conversation however, are not the same as taking those steps oneself. Table 20(a ii) provides results regarding the researched students' own expectations regarding initiating a conversation.

Table 20(a ii): Expectations regarding other students: Do you expect to initiate a conversation with non-Japanese students on campus

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	68.6
No	7	13.7
No response	9	17.6
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 20(a ii) indicate that 35 students (68.6%) expected to initiate a conversation with non-Japanese students on campus, with a further 7 students (13.7%) not holding this expectation. However, nine students did not respond, possibly saving 'face' or genuinely not knowing. In Table 20 (a i) there is evidence of the expectation of interaction with non-Japanese students by 30 of the surveyed students (58.8%). However, the majority of responses in Table 18(a xiii), regarding the ease of discussing studies with Australian students, indicate that this was

very difficult or quite difficult. Related issues were explored further in the semi-structured interview component of the research with Student #81 commenting:

‘When I don’t understand the concept I talk to students and other friends. These friends are mainly Asian Australians who I hang out with. It is a little embarrassing because they are younger than me. There is another Japanese student in my course but he is male and this stops me from asking for help. I feel a slight Caucasian phobia – an inferiority complex and Caucasian Australians are a little intimidating... I have a peer support network, but in Japan students are independent and tend to work alone.’

Differences between Japanese and Australians

Students were asked in Question 20(b) which ways Japanese people differed from Australians since this information can provide some pointers to difficulties in interaction and communication. Table 20(b) presents the results, categorized by the researcher. The Japanese students did identify differences between themselves and their Australian classmates, relating to both academic issues and personal character. Table 20(b) reveals that some 27 positive comments (45.7%) were made regarding the differences between Japanese and Australians, with a further 18 (30.5%) negative comments being recorded. Fourteen of the comments were neutral (23.7%).

Table 20 (b): The ways in which Australian people are different to Japanese people

Response	Number	Percentage
Positive ways	27	45.7
Negative ways	18	30.5
Neutral	14	23.7
Total	59	100.0

Students were able to provide multiple responses for this question and when articulating the ways in they felt that the Japanese and Australians differed. The comments were wide ranging, covering both educational and non-educational areas, such as the meaning of *gambaru* in the Japanese context, that is to do one’s best, studying hard as a student. Other issues related to the time that Australian students spend on campus in Australia when compared to Japan, and the perception of ‘rudeness’ as shown by Australians. Comments offered included:

‘They are more confident in what they do and think. They do not hesitate to comment to lecturers.’ (Student #50)

'They hardly ever admit their faults i.e. they don't say 'I'm sorry', however they do say 'thank you' 'excuse me' more than Japanese people.' (Student #32)

The students identified two areas of difference between Australian and Japanese students, relating to academic issues and personal character. Table 20(c) provides details categorized by the researcher. Twelve students (21.8%) commented upon academic issues, with 43 comments (78.1%) relating to personal character. A number of the comments made in response to Question 20(c) related to time and the use of it.

Table 20(c): Examples of difference relating to academic issues and personal character

Area	Number	Percentage
Academic	12	21.8
Personal character	43	78.1
Total	55	100.0

Question 21 explored the use by the students of their free time in Japan and their expectation of the use of free time in Australia. Potential differences between the way the students typically use their free time in Japan and envisage doing so in Australia is important since, in addition to highlighting what might be the norm in Japan for university students, such information may provide institutions with an insight into expectations regarding services expected, if not required. Multiple responses were possible and Table 21 provides a summary of the results categorized by the researcher. (For further information see Appendices C and D.) Thirty eight responses indicated that they used their free time for indoor activities and entertainment in Japan with 30 indicating that this was how they saw themselves spending free time in Australia. Whereas 23 would spend their free time in exercise and sports in Japan, 29 judged that this is how they would spend their time in Australia. This result almost certainly links to reasons for choosing Australia specifically and general travel promotion of Australia as an outdoors, sporty country. Sixty four responses indicated that free time in Japan would be spent in social activities, with only 40 indicating this would be the case in Australia. Perhaps this is indicative of realization that they would have to work hard at study here.

Table 21: The use of free time in Japan and the expectation of use in Australia

Activity type	Number Japan	Percentage Japan	Number Australia	Percentage Australia
a)Indoor activities, entertainment	38	19.7	30	15.8
a) Exercise/ Sports.	23	11.9	29	15.3
a)Social Life	64	33.3	42	22.2
a)Relaxing with family members	7	3.6	2	1.0
a)Did whatever was good for the time	1	0.5	0	0
a)Not as much time with friends as in Japan b)Build friendships	0	0	3	1.5
a)More alone than in Japan	5	2.6	5	2.6
a)By self in semester	0	0	1	0.5
a)With friends in vacation b)Touring /Sightseeing	23	11.9	31	16.4
a)Working/ b)Working weekends	8	4.2	6	3.1
a)Education, studying d)Going to tuitions - club activities	7	3.6	12	6.3
a)Doing nothing	2	1.0	5	2.6
a)Shopping	12	6.2	6	3.1
b)Miscellaneous	2	1.0	9	4.7
a)Not as much as / more than in Japan	0	0	2	1.0
a)Do what I want	0	0	1	0.5
a)Time an issue	0	0	1	0.5
a)No plans	0	0	1	0.5
a)Things I cannot do on weekdays or other times b) No free time	1	0.5	3	1.5
Total	192	100.0	191	100.0

These themes were followed by Question 22(a) where students were asked to consider differences between study in Japan and in Australia. This was followed up in Question 22(b) where students were asked to provide three examples of study that they had expected or had found to be easier in Australia, than in Japan, and to comment upon those which they thought would be the easiest. Table 22(a) provides the results to Question 22(a)..

Table 22 (a): Comparison of ease of study in Japan and Australia

Country	Number	Percentage
Easier in Australia	30	58.8
Easier in Japan	3	5.8
No Response	18	35.2
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 22(a) reveal that some 30 students (58.5%) maintained that they thought studying in Australia was easier than studying in Japan. Only 3 students (5.8%) thought that study was easier in Japan.

It is important to bear in mind however that some 18 students did not respond to this question. The reasons behind these results vary – but may relate in part to the role played by academic staff in Australia as the following comments appear to indicate:

‘Lecturers are usually very organised and easy to follow (as long as you’re attentive)’
(Student #3).

‘Lecturer seems to like teaching; Japanese lecturers are not interested in teaching so here is good and easy to understand the subject’ (Student #31).

Aspects of study found to be easier or more difficult

Question 22(b) asked students to comment upon three aspects of study in Australia that had thought would be, or had found to be, more difficult in Australia than in Japan. Multiple responses were possible and Table 22(b) presents the results.

Table 22(b): Examples of aspects of study that students thought would be / have been found to be more difficult in Australia than in Japan

More difficult in Australia	Number	Percentage
1) The way of studying in Australia, finding our own information and using English. 2) Assignment writing and developing an argument.	37	35.2
1) Social life at University is not as good as that in Japan	14	13.2
1) Participation and interaction in the class. 2) Being critical, to have one's own ideas, in Japan it is teacher oriented. 3) Taking notes in English, reading.	13	12.3
1) Lectures. Some lecturers do not understand that we are international students and mumble.	10	9.5
1) The way of studying	7	6.6
1) Cultural focus, talking with Australian students and classmates. 2) If I feel that the other person is unacceptable, still I don't know how I can demonstrate that but I sometimes would like to as far as keeping politeness	7	6.6
1) Entry getting into university is easy it is hard to graduate 2) Graduating from university	7	6.6
1) Finding helpful seniors, it is not easy to approach others in English. 2) It is difficult to contact with friends and lecturers.	4	3.8
1) Administrative issues. Staff are not well trained	2	1.9
1) Financial in nature	1	0.9
1) Subject related focus	1	0.9
1) Dietary related	1	0.9
1) 'Big Picture' focus	1	0.9
Total	105	100.0

Results in Table 22(b) reveal that some 37 responses (35.2%) indicated that the way of studying in Australia, where the students had to find information themselves using English, writing assignments and developing an argument, was much more difficult than in Japan. A further 13 responses (12.3%) indicated that participation and interaction in the class, having one's own ideas and being critical, taking notes and reading in English was difficult. In 7 responses (6.6%) the way of studying in Australia was identified as problematic, however no specific information was provided. Ten responses (9.5%) commented on lecture-related issues, with one pointing out that: *'A few lecturers don't seem to understand that we are international students and mumble in the class so I don't understand because I'm not used to English well.'* (Student#7). Overall, a considerable number of responses identified socio-cultural issues relating to learning as more difficult.

Fourteen responses (13.2%) commented that the social life at university in Australia was either not good, or not as good as that in Japan. A further 7 responses (6.6%) found the intercultural side of an international education overseas problematic, particularly talking to Australian students and in terms of responding to individuals deemed as being 'unacceptable' in the student's personal world or home culture. With another 7 responses (6.6%) the differences between the challenge of acceptance into a Japanese university and the ease of graduation, compared with what may have been perceived as the ease of entry into an Australian university with the challenge of graduation, does not appear to have been expected.

A further 4 responses (3.8%) commented on the difficulty of approaching others in English, finding helpful seniors and making contact with friends and lecturers. The reference to finding seniors is apparently a direct reference to the *kohai/sempai* relationship, an integral part of the Japanese educational world. Australian universities do provide support for international students, both academic and personal, but by the student obtaining the assistance of a senior student, 'face' may not be lost in the way it could be, by approaching the university support service itself for assistance. Two responses (1.9%) indicated that staff, particularly administrative staff, were not well trained. No supporting comments to clarify this were provided, but this may be related to who was being asked for what type of information. (Refer Chapter 2 for discussion on 'rudeness'.) Four further responses (3.6%) relating to issues that were subject, finance and dietary related were received, but provided insufficient information for any really definite conclusions to be drawn. The students' multiple responses unsurprisingly covered a wide range of issues, socio-cultural, interpersonal and educational. Data like this can assist institutions better determine the support systems that may need to be employed to ensure that effective learning is not hindered by socio-cultural differences.

Question 22 (c) asked the students what that had expected be easier in Australia than in Japan and if they had found this to be the case. Results are presented in Table 22 (c).

Table 22 (c): Examples of aspects of study that students thought would be / have been found to be easier in Australia than in Japan

Aspect	Number	Percentage
Lecturers	19	37.2
Resources	8	15.6
Support from other students/ others	5	9.8
Assignments	4	7.8
Research/supervisor	3	5.8
Class style	3	5.8
Program logistics	2	3.9
No response	7	13.7
Total	51	100.0

Table 22(c) reveals that only 51 responses were provided on things found easier compared with 105 identified as more difficult in Table 22(b). In Table 22(c) 19 responses (37.2%) identified lecturers were ‘easier’ in Australia than Japan. It is important to bear in mind that a number of students have commented that accessibility to academic staff in Australia was, despite potential language issues, easier than accessing academic staff in Japan. This may possibly be due to what is perceived as a positive attitude shown by Australian academic staff. Availability of resources was cited in 8 responses (15.6%), with 5 responses (9.8%) commenting on the support available from other students or [unidentified] individuals. Assignments were cited as being easier in Australia than in Japan in 4 responses (7.8%), which may relate to greater clarity in terms of the purpose of the assignment in Australia. Research/supervision was cited in 3 responses (5.8%) as being superior to that in Japan. In addition, ‘class style’ was commented upon in another 3 (5.8%) as being easier than in Japan. A further 2 responses (3.9%) identified positively the logistics of studying in Australia, that is timetables. Seven students did not respond to this question. The information presented in Table 22(c) is expanded further in Table 22(d) with more comprehensive examples of the comments summarized in Table 22(c).

Table 22(d): More specific examples of things found easier in Australia

Aspect	Number	Percentage
1) Accessibility of Academic staff and lectures. 2) Clarity regarding the lecturers' expectations regarding assignments.	24	47.0
1) Access to a wide range of well considered resources including on line lecture notes, data bases, facilities and staff.	8	15.6
1)The ability to frame one's own research, the interest shown by the supervisor and the ability to acquire research skills	3	5.8
1)Class style – it is not necessary to dress up, you can have a coffee in the class, and attendance is not very important	3	5.8
1)Admission to the institution	2	3.9
1) Students study fewer subjects (3-4) in greater detail in Australia. 2) In Japan we take about 20. 3) I can focus on all subjects here. We normally study individually in Japan, we have more group works in Australia, I think this is very good because all students are encouraged to study.	2	3.9
No response	9	17.6
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 22(d) reveal that some 24 students (47%) identified the accessibility of academic staff and lectures as being easier in Australia than Japan, in addition to citing clarity regarding the lecturers' expectations regarding assignments. A further 8 responses (15.6%) commented upon access to a wide range of 'well considered' resources, including on-line lecture notes, data bases, and also facilities and staff. Some 3 responses (5.8%) referred to students'

ability to frame their own research, the ability to acquire research skills and the interest shown by their supervisor. Another 3 responses (5.8%) referred to ‘class style’ commenting:

‘You can have a cup of coffee during the class.’ (Student #4)

‘[It is] not necessary to dress up when I go to uni in Australia.’ (Student #15)

‘Class attendance is not very important [in Japan].’ (Student #21).

Two responses (3.9%) referred to the ease of admission to the institution, with a further two (3.9%) highlighting a number of important differences between the two educational systems:

‘Students study fewer subjects (3-4) in greater detail in Australia. In Japan we take about 20. I can focus on all subjects here. We normally study individually in Japan, we have more group works in Australia, I think this is very good because all students are encouraged to study.’ (Student #25).

In light of the comments above, it is potentially the accessibility of academic staff and the resources available to the students that have made the educational process in Australia ‘easier’ than in Japan, yet it must be borne in mind that some 9 students (17.6%) did not respond to this question. Question 22(d) also asked students to consider the ways in which the points that they had raised might affect their learning. Table 22 (e) provides the results.

Table 22(e): Might these points affect learning

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	33	64.7
No	3	5.8
Maybe	0	0
Non-committal	1	1.9
No response	14	27.4
Total	51	100.0

The results reported in Table 22(e) indicate that 33 students (64.7%) were aware that the differences highlighted may potentially impact on their learning through some of the cited differences. That 14 students (27.4%) did not respond may suggest that recognition of the impact of these differences upon their learning was something that the students may have found hard to accept themselves, and through not responding, were saving ‘face’.

Coping strategies

It was felt to be important to explore what strategies the students had, or needed to put in place to deal with the impact of the different learning style(s) in Australia. Data on these matters have the potential to assist universities to deal with the problems that Japanese international students encounter through understanding their attitudes and plans for coping with difficult situations. Question 23(a) asked students how they planned to deal with difficulties encountered. Results in Table 23(a) present the strategies identified.

Table 23(a): Strategies to deal with difficulties encountered

Strategy	Number	Percentage
Consult friends/classmates	27	38.0
Do my best/ Study hard	19	26.7
Consult course coordinator / lecturer	7	9.8
Work on English language	5	7.0
Consult counsellor/ staff at uni	4	5.6
Try to understand the culture and fit in, not take it as personal, talk to seniors.	4	5.6
No strategies	3	4.2
Use the library	1	1.4
Friends in Japan	1	1.4
Total	71	100.0

Results in Table 23(a) where students were able to provide multiple responses, reveal that some 27 responses (38.0%) indicated that they would consult friends and classmates, which may be replicating the role of the group in Japan for the student. Nineteen responses (26.7%) indicated that students would do their best, that is *gambaru*, with this being linked to a core Japanese value. Four responses (5.6%) indicated that the student would consult a counsellor or staff member at university, with another 7 (9.8%) indicating that they would consult their course coordinator or a lecturer. Both these strategies had considerable potential to help identify correctly and solve the problem(s) but only 11 responses identified them. Five responses (7%)

appeared to attribute the problems to English language issues, and indicated that they would work on their English language ability. A further 4 responses (5.6%) indicated that there may be a cultural issue, and thus would try to understand the culture and fit in, not take the difficulties personally, and talk to seniors. Three respondents (4.2%) indicated that they had no strategies, but maintained that they would be motivated. One response indicated that the student would use the library, while another indicated that the student (1.4%) would talk to friends in Japan.

The issues were further explored in Question 22(d) regarding the students' expectation of whether the strategies indicated in Table 23(b) might affect their learning. Results in Table 23(b) reveal that some 33 students (64.7%) felt that the points discussed above in Table 23(a) would affect their learning, with three further students (5.8%) indicating that this was not the case. One student was non-committal, with 14 students not responding. This could indicate that they genuinely did not know or were saving 'face'.

Table 23(b): Might these points affect your learning

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	33	64.7
No	3	5.8
Maybe	0	0
Non-committal	1	1.9
No response	14	27.4
Total	51	100.0

The non-academic side of being in Australia

Studying overseas is not just about academic study and Question 24 asked the students what they thought would be the most exciting aspect of studying in Australia. Table 24 reports the results. Students were able to provide multiple responses to this question. The excitement generated by studying overseas covered wide ranging responses, but all highlighting the positive experiences that the students appear to be experiencing in Australia. Some 22 responses (31.8%) highlighted the academic experience, with 15 (21.7%) focusing on the personal. As revealed in 15 responses (21.7%), the excitement was cultural, with English language the focus for 8 (11.5%). Work experience and/or links to students' careers were the key in 3 responses (2.8%). Being outside Japan was of importance in 2 responses and living overseas in 1. One further respondent found nothing exciting about being overseas.

Table 24(a): The most exciting aspect of study in Australia

Aspect	Number	Percentage
Academic	22	31.8
Personal	15	21.7
Cultural	15	21.7
English Language	8	11.5
Work experience / Career linked	3	4.3
Not being in Japan	2	2.8
Living overseas	1	1.4
Nothing	1	1.4
Nature	1	1.4
Campus style	1	1.4
Total	69	100.0

Feelings upon completion

The excitement of living and studying overseas will typically end upon completion of the academic award. Question 25(a) asked the students who would be the happiest and proudest person/people in Japan at that time. Table 25(a) reports the results.

Table 25 (a): Who would be the happiest at the end of the course

Person(s)	Number	Percentage
Parents	18	32.1
Self	13	23.2
Family	11	19.6
No one / Not sure	7	12.5
Friends	3	5.3
Father	2	3.5
Mother	2	3.5
Total	56	100.0

This question, speculating upon who the students thought would be the happiest at the end of the course, allowed students to provide multiple responses. Results in Table 25(a) indicate that in the students' opinion, parents, cited in 18 responses (32.1%) would be the happiest, with specifically a father indicated in 2, (3.5%), and specifically a mother in a further 2 (3.5%). The student's family was nominated in 11 responses (19.6%), but it is unclear whether they were referring to their extended family, or to parents and siblings. Thirteen responses (23.2%) indicated that the student would be the happiest, with friends identified in 3 others (5.3%). Seven responses (12.5%) indicated that no one would be excited or that the students were unsure.

Table 25(b): How will you feel

Response	Number	Percentage
Be glad / happy	16	29.0
Feel good, proud, pleasure	10	18.1
Sense of accomplishment, achievement, satisfaction	9	16.3
Feel confident	7	12.7
Will appreciate the support from others	4	7.2
Will feel free / relaxed	2	3.6
Can now look for employment	1	1.8
Commencement of something new	1	1.8
Mixed feelings	1	1.8
Will only know upon completion	1	1.8
Others will appreciate me	1	1.8
Concerns regarding my future	1	1.8
Unsure	1	1.8
Total	55	100.0

Students were asked in Question 25(b) how they would feel upon completion, with Table 25(b) reporting the results. It is hardly surprising that as presented in Table 25(b), some 16 students (29%) indicated that they would be 'glad' or 'happy', with a further 10 students (18.1%) indicating that they would 'feel good', or 'proud' and experience 'pleasure' upon the completion

of their program. Some 9 students (16.3%) indicated a ‘sense of accomplishment’, ‘achievement’, and ‘satisfaction’, with a further 7 (12.7%) indicating that they would ‘feel confident’. Four students commented that they ‘Will appreciate the support from others’ (7.2%), with 2 students (3.6%) indicating that they will ‘feel free/relaxed’. Some students provided multiple responses. Unsurprisingly, there were various comments advanced by individual students regarding employment, career paths and the students’ future, however the real surprise was how few comments of this nature were made. One student indicated that ‘[I] Can now look for employment’, with a further individual indicating that this was: ‘Commencement of something new’. One further student had ‘mixed feelings’, whilst another commented that he/she: ‘Will only know upon completion’. One additional student indicated that: ‘Others will appreciate me’, with a further student commenting that he/she had ‘Concerns regarding my future’. One student was unsure. The comments made by the students suggest a sense of satisfaction, but also of entering the ‘unknown’. This may relate to not having secured employment prior to graduation, which would have been the case had the student stayed in Japan.

Table 25(c i): If the program takes longer than expected, how will this be viewed: By you

Response	Number	Percentage
Not a problem – can’t be helped	14	21.2
Not a problem	12	18.1
Disappointed, Depressed / Sad	11	16.6
I didn’t work hard enough	6	9.0
Will create financial issues	6	9.0
I will do my best	5	7.5
Failure embarrassment	4	6.0
I’m not good enough	3	4.5
Worry	2	3.0
Frustration	2	3.0
Waste of time	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

Question 25(c) in three parts also explored the issue of the student's program possibly taking longer than expected, and how this would be viewed by themselves, their parents and friends. Students could provide multiple responses in these questions. Results are reported in Tables 25(ci-ii), respectively.

In Question 25(c i) students were asked how taking longer than expected would be viewed by them. Results in Table 25(c i) indicate that, in 14 responses (21.2%), taking longer than expected was not a problem and could not be helped. This relates directly to the Japanese concept of *shikataganai*: if you have done your best, the outcome is in a sense irrelevant. This important concept was discussed in Chapter 2. Linked with are the 12 comments (18.1%) that it was not a problem. This also appears to relate to *shikataganai*, the fact that you are trying, vindicates you. Eleven comments (16.6%) indicated that the student would feel disappointed, depressed or sad. A further 6 comments (9%) indicated the judgment that they 'didn't work hard enough', with an additional 6 (9%) indicating that this would 'create a financial issue' – important when typically students are funded by their parents. Five responses indicates that the students would do their best (*gambaru*), with 4 others (6.0%) indicating that they would 'feel a failure' and experience 'embarrassment'. A further 3 respondents (4.5%) indicated that 'I'm not good enough'. Two students (3.0%) would 'worry' with a further two individuals (3.9%) expressing frustration. One student (1.5%) commented that it would be a 'waste of time'. These more pessimistic comments indicate potential mental health issues and hence the need for counseling/support services should they be necessary.

Question 25(c ii) explored how taking an extended period of time to complete their degree would be viewed by their parents. Results reported in Table 25(c ii) indicate 8 students (15.6%), considered that their parents would, in their opinion, feel disappointment or depressed should the program take longer than expected, although this sentiment may be the students' views only.

A further 4 students (7.8%) indicated that they didn't know or were not sure. Such a response may relate to 'face' being saved. A further 4 students (7.8%) cited 'parental worry' however, whereas this part of the question pertained to the parents' view of the program taking longer than expected, it is not clear if this response pertains to the parents' worrying about the student, or the student worrying about their parents' reaction. Four more students (7.8%) commented that their 'Parents would still be proud and supportive'. Loss of parental trust was important to 2 students (3.9%) with one student commenting: 'I have not studied enough', and a further student indicating that: 'Parents would not permit this'. Yet another student commented that: 'Parents will question why'. Twenty six students (50.9%) did not respond to this question. This high number of non-respondents may suggest that, since anecdotally many students were being

funded by their parents, taking longer than expected may denote students who have failed to *gambaru*, that is they have not done their best.

Table 25(c ii): Students were asked if the program takes longer than expected, how will this be viewed: By your parents

Response	Number	Percentage
Disappointment / Depressed	8	15.6
Don't know / Not sure	4	7.8
Parental worry	4	7.8
Parents would still be proud and supportive	4	7.8
Loss of parental trust	2	3.9
I have not studied enough	1	1.9
Parents would not permit this	1	1.9
Parents will question why	1	1.9
No response	26	50.9
Total	51	100.0

Friends, and being part of the group, are important sources of support to the students. It was important therefore to consider how they would respond, should their friend studying in Australia taking longer than expected to complete their academic program. Question 25(c iii) explored how friends would react should the student take longer than expected to complete their academic program. Not all students responded to this question (see below), those who did, could provide multiple responses. The responses are reported in Table 25(c iii). Since typically, the students' friends in Japan know little, if anything about the Australia educational system, the thirteen responses (25.4%) indicating that in the eyes of their friends their taking longer to complete the program was not a problem, the students were probably correct – the friends potentially being unaware of the student's program and the difference between the two educational systems. Their friend, having done his/her best, taking longer than expected is not a problem. Five responses (9.8%) indicated that the students were not sure how their friends would react, with a further 5 (9.8%) feeling that their friends would sympathise and encourage them. Four responses (7.8%) indicated that their friends would 'Think I prefer Australia', while a further three indicated (5.8%) friends would think 'I have not studied enough'. One response

indicated that it was ‘nothing to do with them’, and a further commented that: ‘They will think I’m playing too hard’. Another response stated that: ‘They know little re study here’.

Table 25(c iii): Students were asked if the program takes longer than expected, how will this be viewed by: By your friends

Response	Number	Percentage
Not a problem	13	25.4
Don’t know / Not sure	5	9.8
Will sympathise with and encourage me	5	9.8
Disappointment / Worried/Depressed	4	7.8
They will think I prefer Australia	4	7.8
I have not studied enough	3	5.8
Nothing to do with them	1	1.9
They will think I’m playing too hard	1	1.9
They know little re study here	1	1.9
No response	14	27.4
Total	51	100.0

Results in Table 25(c) indicate 14 students (27.4%) did not respond to this question, which may suggest that, whereas if ‘face’ was to be saved – the situation was not viewed in as serious a way as with the students’ parents, where 26 students had not responded. As discussed in Chapter 2, the reason for attending university in Japan is different to that in Australia. In the semi-structured interview, Student #73 commented: ‘*In Japan no one expects undergraduate students to study*’. Not studying in Australia however, will typically result in failure.

Question 25 (d) explored this issue of failure further, with the question centred on who would be the saddest and most disappointed if they didn’t succeed. Results are presented in Table 25(d).

Table 25(d): If you are not successful who will be the saddest and most disappointed

Who	Number	Percentage
Self	19	33.9
Parents	15	26.7
Family	8	14.2
No one	5	8.9
Not sure/ Don't know	4	6.8
Mother	2	3.5
Father	2	3.5
Friends	1	1.7
Total	56	100.0

Results in Table 25(d) reveal that 19 students (33.9%) believed that, if they were unsuccessful, they themselves would be the most disappointed, with 15 parents (26.7%) being the second most disappointed. Two students (3.5%) indicated that their mother would be the most disappointed, with a further two students (3.5%) indicating that their father would be the most disappointed. Eight students cited their family 14.2% (possibly including siblings) as being disappointed. Five students (8.9%) indicated that no one would be disappointed, with 4 students (6.8%) not being sure. One student indicated a friend as being the most disappointed.

Students were asked in Question 25(e), to which they could provide multiple responses, how they would feel if they were not successful. Results are presented in Table 25(e). Responses from 14 students (25.4%) indicated that they would 'feel bad, sad, depressed etc', with a further 6 responses (10.9%) indicating determination to succeed. Four responses (7.2%) indicated that students didn't know how they would feel. Three responses (5.5%) indicate that student 'will feel guilty', which may relate to their having been funded by parents or other family members. Two responses (3.6%) commented that the student will have gained through the experience itself, with two further responses indicating that if they have done their best, they were vindicated [*shikataganai*]. Two further responses indicates that the students would *gambaru* (do their best and not give up). One response expressed concerns regarding career implications, with another indicating a student looking at 'whose fault it was'. Another student commented that his/her family and the student themselves would understand. One student indicated that he/she would deal with it at the time, with a further student indicating that he/she would cry. Seventeen

students did not respond to this question, which may suggest that recognizing the possibility of failing is not an option for them.

Table 25(e): How will you feel

Response	Number	Percentage
Will feel bad, sad, depressed etc	14	25.4
I will succeed	6	10.9
I don't know	4	7.2
I will feel guilty	3	5.5
Experiential gain	2	3.6
If I'd done my best	2	3.6
I will <i>gambaru</i> (do my best and not give up)	2	3.6
Career concerns	1	1.8
I will look at whose fault it is	1	1.8
Family, self will understand	1	1.8
Will deal with it at the time	1	1.8
Cry	1	1.8
No response	17	30.9
Total	51	100.0

Given the results in Table 25(e) there may be a need for the 14 students (25.4%) who indicated that they would feel bad, sad, or depressed to receive counseling, particularly if 'face' has been lost. The student looking at 'whose fault it was' may also require counselling. Those students expressing concerns regarding career implications may also need further support, along with the student indicating that they would cry. In the Japanese cultural context however, having done one's best is enough. If one fails - *shikataganai* – it cannot be helped, and this aspect of the culture could be used as an approach in counseling in Australia, should this be necessary.

Summary of the main results

The number of postgraduate students was in excess of expectations and thus raises questions about the preconceived nature of the university education market for Japanese international

students lying chiefly in the undergraduate area. The 33 postgraduate students potentially came to Australia for reasons somewhat different to the undergraduate students. Even so, some postgraduate students did seem to make this decision without serious thought since as Student # 1 (postgraduate) commented: '*Elimination not US, UK, Canada, New Zealand*'.

The students' reasons for coming to Australia were: personal reasons - 5 responses, relating to the Australian educational system - 29 responses, and relating to Australia the country - 64 responses. Multiple responses were permitted but the overall impression gained is a desire to experience a totally different culture with this probably influenced by holiday advertisements for Australia and actual visits here. Many respondents had made previous visits to Australia for purposes primarily related to travel, sightseeing and holiday, and in some cases multiple visits. These earlier visits may have typically created for the students a belief in Australia as the relaxed holiday destination. The impression from all the comments and findings is that Australia the study destination has typically been framed by these students as Australia the holiday destination, and that may not mesh well with Australian universities' expectations of its students. The reality appears that the majority of students in this research chose Australia the country as the primary reason for studying here.

Given the general motivation and lack of preparation for study in Australia, unsurprisingly learning-related problems covered a wide range of skills such as note taking in lectures and reading for assignments. Difficulties in writing assignments were indicated as important for many, along with participating and asking questions in tutorials. Discussing themes or topics with Australian students was difficult as was group work. Many of these difficulties may be attributed to learning in an Australian tertiary culture quite different to that found in Japan.

Many participating students had spoken to other Japanese students in Australia and/or Japan prior to enrolment regarding study in Australia. Information provided by the students indicated that study in Australia would be difficult. However, many results relating to skills required for academic success suggests that these students really did not fully appreciate what difficulties lay ahead. Few students, at their own admission, had read in order to better prepare for studies in Australia, and thus this contributed to a lack of awareness of institutional expectations.

It was expected that a significant number of respondents would have been motivated to study overseas by siblings or other family members who had undertaken such an overseas sojourn. This was not the case, with few respondents indicating influence from this source. The number of both oldest and youngest siblings in this study tends to suggest that some changes are occurring in the values of Japanese society as these relate to family, priority formerly generally being given to the eldest.

The results pertaining to those students who had undertaken a Foundation Studies program in preparation for, or to increase their chances of acceptance into, their Australian university was considerably small than expected. This is particularly interesting since one of the participating institutions, at the commencement of this study, did require Japanese students, who had not successfully completed the first year of university in Japan, to undertake such studies prior to the commencement of their Australian tertiary experience. While students may have circumvented this requirement as postgraduates, as the results of this study suggest, undergraduate studies in Japan may not be sufficient preparation for studies in the different Australian context.

The time spent on English language in preparation for their academic program ranged considerably, but was lower than would be expected, with this suggesting that the importance to the students of language competence was genuinely not well understood. For many of the students, there appeared to have been little concept of the enormity of studying in English at the tertiary level, as opposed to learning English.

Overall the results of this research tend to indicate that the students surveyed were not well prepared for differences in academic expectations at Australian universities. A reasonable number of students indicated that they had visited Australian university campuses prior to enrollment. In some cases this may have been related to preparation of their own subsequent enrollment, although reasons cited by students suggest that a number of visits were to use institutional facilities. A number of students maintained that they had audited a lecture in Australia prior to the commencement of their program on these visits, with a sizable number also indicating that this was not the case.

Many results relating to the skills required for academic success suggest that the students really did not fully appreciate what difficulties lay ahead. The comments from the students themselves tend to reinforce this judgment. Few students, at their own admission, had read in order to prepare for studies in Australia, and this contributed to a lack of awareness of institutional expectations. Results also indicate that the students who responded in the questionnaire and interview were increasingly aware of the differences in cultural expectations, and the ways in which their skills, which had been formed in the Japanese context, were often not particularly appropriate in the Australian academic culture with its demands for independent critical thinking and public argument in class and tutorials. Results from questions relating to completion and satisfaction indicate that there may be a need for counseling support should the students not finish in the minimum time, as some mental health issues are indicated as distinctly possible.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

This essentially preliminary study explored the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students undertaking tertiary level studies at two Australian universities. The focus of the research was upon issues pertaining to university policies in order to improve the educational experiences of Japanese international students at Australian universities, hence the arguments and issues covered in the following chapters are restricted to this. The absence of substantial, relevant research and literature pertaining to this cultural group undertaking specifically Australian university level studies meant there was very little basis upon which to build. Perhaps unsurprisingly in these circumstances, there were several unexpected findings in this study, amongst these being the number of postgraduate students who were involved and the chief reasons for these students choosing Australian universities for study.

Postgraduate numbers and the decision to study in Australia

Generally prior to this research, the university market involving Japanese students was considered to be chiefly for undergraduate students. Results in Table 1(e) indicate that a clear majority of respondents, some 33, (64.7%), were enrolled in postgraduate level programs, with 16 (31.3%) enrolled at the undergraduate level. While the nature of the sample may have influenced the findings, there is other evidence to suggest changes in the international student education market in Australia. Recent DEST figures provided through Australian Education International (2006-8) indicate changes in overseas students enrolling in postgraduate studies in Australia, and support the trend revealed by the results in this study. There is also other, emerging, anecdotal evidence to suggest that numbers of Japanese students are undertaking programs at the masters and doctoral levels, with staff at a number of Australian universities reporting an increase in numbers enrolling in postgraduate programs over the last several years. The increase in postgraduate numbers has implications for accepting institutions, given the learning needs and substantial challenges identified in this research, and these will be returned to later in this chapter.

The Japanese students' decision to study in Australia, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, may be linked to significant changes to Japan itself as the country undergoes social, political and economic change as outlined in Chapter 2 (eg see Mathews 2004; White & Mathews 2004). Certainly results obtained regarding the position in the family of these students who responded to the questionnaire, reported in Table 1(a), indicates some change in Japanese values, with more middle/youngest children represented in the sample than would be anticipated (25 eldest/only and 21 youngest/middle children). Traditionally the Japanese have favoured the

oldest child. Results in Table 8(d) indicate that the idea to study overseas had come mainly from the students themselves, with 46 (85.1%) indicating this. If these self-reports can be taken at face value, then it would seem that the authority of the family and parents has changed considerably regarding educational and further study issues. Results from the semi-structured interviews suggest that parents are probably mostly ignorant of issues involved in studying overseas, and that their children probably did carry the most influence in this decision-making.

Additionally, there have been significant changes to the Japanese educational system, operating since at least April 1 2004 and probably for some time prior, when the prestigious Japanese National Universities became autonomous institutions. The Japanese universities themselves and the educational programs they offer are still being reviewed in terms of Japan's future needs. A number of these have been amalgamated, and the academic philosophy underpinning each of these institutions is still unclear as they continue to undergo change, and thus students may view this as an opportunity to experience an international education. This may be particularly the case, since the 'job for life' acquired through graduating from a prestigious Japanese university, can no longer be guaranteed (Frederick 2005; Mathews 2004).

Somewhat paradoxically, the main reasons cited by the researched cohort, regarding their purpose/s for undertaking tertiary studies in Australia, do not appear to reflect educational motives other than in the broadest self-development sense. Question 11(d) in the questionnaire explored why Australia was chosen as a study destination with results reported in Table 11(d) indicating that, with some 64 responses (65.3%), Australia the country was the specific determinant for undertaking tertiary studies here. A smaller number, some 29 (29.5%) educational reasons were given as the chief motivating factor. A yet smaller number, 5 responses (5.1%), nominated personal reasons, primarily related to personal or family commitments.

Given the cultural values held by Japanese students regarding university studies analyzed in Chapter 2, at least at the undergraduate level, this focus upon non-vocational and non-educational reasons should perhaps not be too surprising. There is general agreement that for many Japanese tertiary students at least the undergraduate study period at university is a time for social development and relaxation, after long years of study at high school and the struggle to gain university entry. This is in distinct contrast to an Australian perspective, and the perspective of Australian university administrators, that such study is probably almost universally a step in specific career preparation.

Many Australian students also choose international degrees, or participate in student exchange programs, for similar reasons in order to travel to desired foreign destinations. However it is possible to speculate, in the absence of definitive research, that these Australian students would

rank career preparation issues of at least equal importance, and that many would mention the benefits of international study in an era of globalization (Spring 2008). Given the relatively long-standing policy of the Japanese government to promote globalization (Kubota 2002), it is somewhat surprising that the Japanese subjects in this study did not mention globalization and related skill development specifically. That the considerable number of postgraduate students in the sample contributed to the finding regarding Australia as the overriding reason for choice of study also raises some interesting questions about their conceptions of postgraduate study and its purposes, issues which could not be answered in this research.

It is possible that Japanese society and Japanese international students see university degrees more in terms of liberal education, with specific subjects or specializations not an important issue. This is certainly the approach to employment and careers which appears to prevail in Japan (see Chapter 2). While the current Australian attitude is pre-occupation with university studies as specific preparation for work and careers, this has not always been the case. Forty years ago in Australia general Arts degrees were seen as acceptable and valued by many employers, although this has certainly changed in the last two decades. It is important to note too that, in the USA, the degree attained is not regarded as particularly important by employers, especially those in larger organizations, with selection being determined more by generic skills and the ability to reveal success in the studies chosen (Hunamaker & Riley 2006). There is some evidence that this attitude towards recruitment is now occurring in Australia too with larger employers (see www.graduatecareers.com.au accessed 29 November 2008). Since Japanese values appear to have been influenced to some degree by those prevailing in the USA, on account of wartime occupation, closeness of political association since then, etc., it is possible that these Japanese values are in some ways a reflection of those that prevail in the USA. In any case, the Japanese value of proving that one can *gambaru* (do one's best) may be similar to the American value of having proved oneself in one's chosen studies (see Hunamaker & Riley 2006).

The finding that non-educational reasons are drivers of choice for many of these Japanese students confirms Smart et. al.'s (1999, pp1-2) earlier findings that expectations of enjoyable social experiences were an important factor in their determination to study in Australia. A further important motivation for Japanese students is the 'challenging' of oneself through an education experience as discussed in Chapter 2, allied to deep-seated Japanese cultural values. The experiencing of cultural values different to those of their own Japanese culture would appear to be strongly tied to this.

Results reported in Table 11(a) revealed that a considerable number of students, 29 (56.8%), had visited Australia previously, although 16 (31.3%) had not. A further 6 (11.7%) did not respond to this part of the question. Of the students who did respond, 8 (27.5%) had in fact made multiple visits to Australia. Subsequent to analysis of results from this direct, self-admission question, cross referencing of data, via written comments and answers to other questions, revealed that previous visits to Australia had been made by some 33 students, 20 of the 34 postgraduate students, and 13 of the 16 undergraduate students, thus approximately two thirds of the 51 respondents had made earlier visits. It seems that the earlier visits made by the students had significantly, and favourably, influenced these students' view of Australia, including perhaps the tertiary education system.

The purpose of the earlier visits is important when considering reasons for study here with results in Table 11(c) revealing the reasons given for the earlier visit(s). For some 21 respondents (65.6%), the earlier visits also were related to non-academic activities, primarily travel and sight seeing, or for short term Home Stay Programs or visiting friends or family. By contrast, only 2 respondents (6.2%) referred to academic visits, having visited previously as Exchange Students. One respondent only referred to a previous visit pertaining to English Language study purposes. However other results reported in Table 11(g), involving further probing in the questionnaire regarding the Australian reasons for choosing Australia as a study destination, indicate that 10 respondents (17.2%) indicated that Australia was English speaking and they were interested in Australian English. Other results in Table 11(g) indicate a mixture of language and cultural reasons. Some 22 (37.9%) gave reasons that included that they felt comfortable in Australia, they liked the comfortable lifestyle and good weather, people are kind and Australia is safe, along with a long interest in Australia and its cultural diversity. Eleven (18.9%) gave reasons related to financial issues. This last finding is certainly in line with the financial considerations for international students in choosing Australian universities as outlined in Chapter 2.

The results regarding non-educational reasons in effect confirm that the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance, and Public Administration's (2007) report, *Servicing Our Future*, has identified an important trend of educational tourism for the higher education industry in Australia. But, as results of this research reveal only too clearly, the identification of that market is one thing and the satisfying the needs of those who come is something else entirely different. The declines in higher education Japanese students numbers over the past few years (see Chapter 2), while possibly attributable to the increases in the value of the Australian dollar relative to the Japanese yen, may possibly be the result of word-of-mouth

indications of disappointments with the tourism education experience from former students, given the problematic learning needs and expectations revealed in this research.

Validity and reliability of findings in this research

The finding of non-educational reasons for choosing Australian universities for study in initial analyses of data were so surprising that the semi-structured interviews were deliberately used to help confirm this. Reliability is enhanced when more than one source of data is used, as is validity (see Gay 1992; Cohen & Manion 1994; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister 1994). There was initially some concern that the return rate for the questionnaires was approximately thirty percent and hence may have resulted in atypical findings. However, in effect overall findings from the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D) confirmed that socio-cultural interest and personal development reasons were important drivers of choice for these Japanese students. They also generally confirmed the other findings reported in Chapter 4. It needs also to be borne in mind that, the reliability cross-check built into the questionnaire through some questions, revealed that only one of the 51 respondents appeared to not be answering in a consistent way (see Chapter 3 Methods and Procedures). Furthermore, the findings relating to reasons for choice are consistent with the earlier finding of Smart et al (1999), albeit in a different educational sector, leading to greater confidence in findings reported in this research.

Subsequent to the conclusion of this research study, other evidence on the needs and expectations of Japanese students emerged through the SBS (2008) series of programs on the difficulties facing students, particularly international students, studying at Australian universities. Overall the series highlighted the issues of language and cultural adjustment, particularly cultural adjustment to academic requirements which has been a strong theme in some of the relevant literature reviewed (eg see Cobbin, Logan & Cox 1999; Owens 2005; Morley-Warner 2000). The case study featuring the Japanese postgraduate student Tsuyoshi Osagawa at a Queensland university provided important, additional evidence to support the overall findings of this research. Tsuyoshi arrived in Australia more interested in the Australian way of life, and in relaxing free from the constrictions of Japanese society, than his accountancy degree. The result was that he failed at the end of the first year through inadequate self-preparation for study here, and lack of relevant academic skills for the Australian academic context. By the time he realized his academic inadequacies and sought assistance from Student Services, it was too late. He then returned to Japan, more than somewhat disappointed.

In providing evidence of academic failure of this student, the television series provided evidence of what had been a concern underlying this research, but which could not be built into this study for ethical and practical reasons, the harsh reality of inadequate preparation and support for

Japanese international students, and probably many other students from non-Anglo cultures with English as a second language. While one case study can be criticized on the grounds it lacks generalizability, notwithstanding the current, wide acceptance of limited number of case studies in academic research, this one reflected the findings of this research so precisely and accurately that it was almost as if it had been chosen to illustrate them. In effect this case study provides additional supporting evidence of the reliability, validity and importance of the findings in this study. After next considering the educational reasons for Japanese students studying in Australia, this discussion will look at the learning needs and expectations revealed by this research, and what needs to be done regarding university policies to move towards more effective outcomes and learning experiences for them.

The only concern, regarding reliability and validity of the findings reported here, is in relation to the fact that no respondent in the study self-reported interest in migration to Australia. Australian migration rules were changed just as this questionnaire was being administered, and one Japanese student wrote to the researcher protesting vehemently about this, asking for assistance in overturning the federal government decisions. Despite this, not one respondent indicated in the returned questionnaire that migration was a reason for study in Australia, and only one in Table 11(c) indicated work in Australia as a reason for coming, although several did mention Holiday Working Visas. Apart from the letter writer, who may have been the one who indicated the desire to work in Australia, no other Japanese students in the cohort indicated that they were interested in migration, a legitimate objective (see Chapter 2). If migration was an objective, they may have chosen not to participate, or to remain silent, in a typically Japanese fashion.

Educational reasons

Certainly some of the Japanese respondents indicated that they considered educational reasons for study in Australia as important, although these were in the relative minority (29.5% of responses). In terms of educational reasons, clarification was sought in the questionnaire regarding the main purpose(s) underpinning the decision to study in Australia, with the summarized results presented in Table 11(e) identifying four main reasons. These were: (a) Australia being viewed as the educational or knowledge centre of Asia, with high quality universities, good, enthusiastic teaching staff and interesting courses; (b) high quality training with the responding student's discipline, being well known and highly regarded in Australia; (c) relative ease of entry and recognition of prior learning; and (d) the responding student(s) wanting to study in English.

Results in Table 11(e) indicate that 9 (30%) responses focused on the reputation of the Australian educational system. A further 7 (23.3%) were influenced by the availability of their

specific discipline, while 4 (13.3%), were influenced by the range and standard of course offerings. A further 4, (13.3%) cited the flexibility of the application procedures. Although 3 (10%) maintained they were influenced by the ‘Quality of academic staff’, the meaning of this is unclear, since the specific interpretation of this was not explored in the questionnaire, or follow-up interviews. A further 3 (10%) responses, provided miscellaneous reasons, adding little further insight.

Together these reasons reflect the general motives for international students to study in Australia outlined in Chapter 2, relating to opportunity, quality of education and attainment of specific knowledge and skills. While ease of entry and recognition of prior learning are certainly logical attractions, it is unknown on what basis the students could determine ‘the quality of Australian universities’, nor by whom Australia was seen as ‘the educational or knowledge centre of Asia’. Whereas some students cited ‘a high level of education in Australia’ as being their reason for coming here, this research demonstrates repeatedly (see below) that many of the responding students were not aware of the learning/study skills required, and thus they were ill-prepared for their learning here and their Australian universities’ expectations of them.

Regardless of the reasons for coming to Australia, other findings in this study, now further discussed, clearly revealed some serious issues for these students regarding the types of skills needed if they were to succeed academically in the Australian context. Results now further explored, also reveal an apparent ‘romanticising’ of study that indicate that the students were influenced by their interest in and travel to Australia, but somewhat unaware of an Australian university’s expectations of them, and thus what would transpire when they enrolled at Australian universities. The realities of what study at an Australian university meant for these students were explored, given the general hypothesis underlying the study was that many students certainly initially did not understand the complex demands of Australian universities, demands that are quite different to those in a Japanese university cultural context (see Chapter 2).

Difficulties of study in Australia: Areas of skills needed for academic success in Australia

Somewhat surprisingly, in many instances both the undergraduate and postgraduate students experienced the same difficulties meeting Australian academic expectations in approximately equal numbers. This was revealed more clearly when additional analyses involving undergraduate and postgraduate status were performed on results reported in Tables 18(a i-xv), with these additional breakdowns reported in Tables 26(a-c) below. The reasons for this are believed to lie, firstly, in the difference in the two educational systems and, secondly, in the

significantly different teaching and learning styles in Japan and Australia. Probably most important however, were the expectations of the students shaped through formative cultural experiences in Japan (see Chapter 2). These findings, discussed in more depth below, necessitate a major rethinking by Australian academics and university policy makers of what they can reasonably expect of Japanese postgraduate students in terms of specific academic skills supposedly already mastered.

Three areas of skills were identified as being important for success in academic study in planning the specific questions in the questionnaire, with these based generally upon texts used for academic study purposes in Australian universities (eg Morley-Warner 2000; also see Chapter 2). These can also be related specifically to lists of graduate attributes from diverse faculties in Australian universities. Specifically these areas are:

- 1) Basic learning skills pertaining, for example, to listening to and understanding lectures, and understanding, reading for and writing assignments
- 2) Processes in learning, pertaining to skills such as note taking in lectures, using the internet and asking questions in tutorials
- 3) Socio-cultural learning issues such as discussing studies and developing a relationship with both Australian students and lecturers.

These skills/areas are somewhat arbitrarily divided into three groups pertaining to basic learning skills, processes in learning and socio-cultural issues, but, as the results reported here show, these are useful categories for understanding the difficulties encountered.

The summary Tables 26 (a-c) below, based upon results in Tables 18(a i - xv), provide the students' responses to these skill areas with additional analyses of data based upon whether respondents indicated that they were undergraduate or postgraduate. These will be commented upon generally before more in-depth exploration of results for individual skills/attributes. Note that in interpreting these figures the percentages given refer to the total number of respondents to a question/issue, although they may be categorized as undergraduate or postgraduate.

Table 26(a): Summary of basic learning skills

Skill Attribute	Very or quite difficult			Not particularly difficult, quite or very easy		
	UG	PG	UG & PG	UG	PG	UG & PG
Listening and understanding in lectures	22.0% (11)	22.0% (11)	44.0% (22)	12.0% (6)	44.0% (22)	56.0% (28)
Note taking in lectures	28.6% (14)	20.3% (10)	48.9% (24)	4.1% (2)	46.9% (23)	51.1% (25)
Understanding your assignments	14.6% (7)	12.4% (6)	27.1% (13)	18.8% (9)	54.2% (26)	72.9% (35)
Reading for assignments	25.0% (12)	22.9% (11)	47.9% (23)	8.3% (4)	43.8% (21)	52.1% (25)
Writing assignments	32.0% (16)	44.0% (22)	76.0% (38)	2.0% (1)	22.0% (11)	24% (12)
Understanding what your lecturers mean	19.2% (9)	17.0% (8)	36.2% (17)	14.9% (7)	48.9% (23)	63.8% (30)

Table 26(b): Summary of processes in learning

Skill Attribute	Very or quite difficult			Not particularly difficult, quite or very easy		
	UG	PG	UG & PG	UG	PG	UG & PG
Explaining in English what you know in Japanese	21.2% (10)	29.8% (14)	51.1% (24)	12.8% (6)	36.2% (17)	48.9% (23)
Asking questions in tutorials	20.4% (10)	28.6% (14)	49.0% (24)	12.2% (6)	38.8% (19)	51.0% (25)
Discussing studies with Australian students	28.6% (14)	34.7% (17)	63.3% (31)	4.1% (2)	32.6% (16)	38.7% (18)
Group Work	20.8% (10)	20.8% (10)	41.6% (20)	12.6% (6)	45.8% (22)	58.4% (28)
Talking to your lecturers	17.0% (8)	12.8% (6)	29.8% (14)	14.9% (7)	55.3% (26)	70.2% (33)
Finding the information you need in the library	12.5% (6)	10.4% (5)	22.9% (11)	20.8% (10)	56.3% (27)	77.1% (37)
Using the internet	8.2% (4)	0% (0)	8.2% (4)	26.5% (13)	65.3% (32)	91.8% (45)

Table 26(c): Summary of socio-cultural issues

Skill Attribute	Very or quite difficult			Not particularly difficult, quite or very easy.		
	UG	PG	UG & PG	UG	PG	UG & PG
Developing a relationship with other students	16.3% (8)	10.2% (5)	26.5% (13)	18.4% (9)	55.1% (27)	73.5% (36)
Developing a relationship with your lecturers	20.8% (10)	20.8% (10)	41.7% (20)	12.6% (6)	45.8% (22)	58.3% (28)

Overall, results presented here in Tables 26(a-c) reveal that, in a significant number of cases, the postgraduate respondents do not appear to find basic study skills any easier than the undergraduate students do. For example, some 16 (32.0%) undergraduates and the significantly greater figure of 22 (44%) postgraduates, overall some 38 (76.0%), found writing assignments ‘very or quite difficult’. This may be contrasted with the 1 (2.0%) undergraduate and 11 (22%) postgraduate students, some 12 (24%) overall, who maintained that this skill was ‘not particularly difficult, quite or very easy’. The difficulty experienced by postgraduates probably relates to the level of competency and analytical thinking required in advanced studies, and the forms of assignments requiring specific English language writing skills (Kubota 1992: Morley-Warner 2000). This may also be linked to the very different learning skill requirements in the Australian tertiary sector when compared to those in Japan, where, once admission to the institution has been attained, there is a lesser need for sound study skills, since academic success is virtually guaranteed for a substantial proportion (see Chapter 2). It is possible therefore that Japanese students in Australia, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, may typically have few sound study skills to employ in the Australian educational environment that involve deeper levels of analysis and analytical thinking, because these have not been fostered in all but the best of Japanese universities.

Table 26(c) reveals that processes in learning, for example, ‘explaining in English what you know in Japanese’ was found to be ‘quite’ or ‘very difficult’ for some 24 respondents (51.1%) The cause of this difficulty may be based upon lack of active participation in a Japanese university, in addition to problems in speaking in English (see Sawir 2005, and below). Some 24 respondents (49%) maintained that ‘asking questions in tutorials’ was also ‘very difficult’. This

skill also may not be necessarily required in the Japanese tertiary sector. Discussing studies with Australian students was found to be ‘very difficult’ for some 31 respondents (63%), potentially due to this skill of discussing issues with one’s classmates even in one’s own language being challenging, and significantly more so in a language other than one’s own. Although some 20 respondents (41.6%) indicated that they found group work ‘very or quite difficult’, there is no evidence to reveal whether the difficulty was forming the utterance, or presenting the utterance to the group.

In terms of socio-cultural issues, as reflected in Summary Table 26(c), developing relationships with other students and lecturers appears to have been easier for postgraduates. This figure however may be influenced by the significant larger number of participating research students who would typically have greater opportunities to converse with other postgraduate level students and would have gained skills in their undergraduate studies.

Overall, however, these results appear to indicate that, in a number of categories, there is little evidence to differentiate between the degree of difficulty experienced by the postgraduate students, all of whom had previously experienced tertiary studies, when compared to the undergraduate students, most or all who had probably not. A number of these findings were unexpected, given that all respondents had passed English entry language tests and some were of postgraduate status having already obtained a degree, but perhaps should be interpreted with caution with regard to lack of concern expressed by respondents about problems. It must be borne in mind when considering this data that respondents indicating that the skill was ‘not particularly difficult’, or ‘quite or very easy’, may possibly have been saving ‘face’ to themselves by placing themselves in that category, suggesting that students may in fact have found these learning skills even more difficult than they could accept – even to themselves. Certainly information obtained from the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D) suggested that many of these skills are regarded as very difficult for Japanese students as a group.

Basic Learning Skills

1) Listening and understanding in lectures

Data in Table 7(d) in the Results chapter reveal that only 3 of 34 respondents indicated that they could understand easily a lecture in English that they had audited prior to enrollment. Another three indicated that they could not understand anything, while 15 indicated that it was difficult to understand because it was in specialized English or they were concerned because it was nothing like they had expected. A further 13 indicated that it was similar to their expectations and they could understand some of it, so they were happy. The later results in Tables 18(a i)-18(a xv),

which form the basis for the summary Tables 26(a-c), reveal another set of similar results, thus providing additional confirmation of the problem. As lectures in Australia are conducted in English it is vital that Japanese students can listen effectively and understand the lecture and their lecturer(s).

Table 26(a) reveals that some 11 (22.0%) of the postgraduates maintained that that they found listening to and understanding lectures in Australia, 'very or quite difficult'. Furthermore, 11 undergraduate students (22.0%) indicated that they felt the same. Whereas 22 (44.0%), of post-graduate students indicated that they found this skill 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy', only 6 (12.0%) undergraduate students placed this skill in the same category. Overall, some 22 respondents (44%) referred to 'Listening and understanding in lectures', as being 'very or quite difficult', although some 28 respondents (56%) maintained that they found this skill 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. These findings may be linked to the very important difference between studying English and studying in English, a difference not apparently appreciated by many of the students, and potentially leading to significant difficulties. It had been expected that the undergraduate cohort would find listening to and understanding lecturers difficult since in the Japanese context active participation is not expected. Perhaps for postgraduates, since a significant number of them were undertaking research degrees, they probably would have little interaction with lecturers in a lecture format, that is, they may have had only occasional practice in this in the Australian university setting.

2) Note taking in lectures

It is important that students are able to recognize and record key points raised in a lecture to both assist in their own comprehension of the lecture when considered after the class, and to refer to in related, subsequent assignments. When note taking in lectures is considered, significant numbers of responding students, some 14 (28.6%) undergraduate students and 10 (20.4%) post-graduate students, 24 (48.9%) in all, maintained that they found this skill 'very or quite difficult'. Conversely however, some 2 (4.1%) of undergraduates and 23 (46.9%) of postgraduates, overall 25 respondents (51.1%), maintained that this skill was 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. Overall, however, there would appear to be a significant proportion expressing difficulties in an important, foundational academic skill.

3) Understanding your assignments

Having taken notes in a lecture for use in an associated assignment requires the students to understand the nature and aims of an assignment and the relevance of the notes in order to produce the assignment. If the student is to successfully read and research the theme of the

assignment, it is important to have access to a range of resources, and to be selective through making judgments about the importance of the material sourced. This requires the student to be able to understand the purpose of the assignment and, more importantly, have a level of English sufficiently advanced, to do this combined with sound analytical skills.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, 7 (14.6%) undergraduate respondents found this skill to be 'very or quite difficult', which may be contrasted with the slightly lower figure of postgraduate respondents 6 (12.4%) who also indicated that they found the skill 'very or quite difficult', in total some 13 respondents (27.1%). However a further 9 (18.8%) of undergraduate respondents maintained that they found this 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy', with some 26 (54.2%) of postgraduates agreeing. Overall, some 35 (72.9%) of respondents maintained that they found this study skill 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy, although it is unknown however what marks the students achieved. Given the somewhat different nature of assignments in Japan, these results may, for some students, demonstrate 'face' being saved, or due to the timing of this research, in the early part of the semester the students had yet to encounter an assignment of significance. It should also be noted that assignments in Japan are often based upon a short question based 'test', and thus these Japanese students in Australia may be quite unaccustomed to researching the theme of their assignment(s), particularly regarding the requirement to source related reading material, followed by writing up the intended essay to meet the requirements of an Australian university.

4) Reading for assignments

Aside from understanding assignment requirements, it is also necessary to be able to source, read and understand the relevant literature in order to subsequently write the assignment. This requires sound language skills to understand the text and ability to recognize the difference between points that are relevant, and those that are just 'interesting'.

When reading for assignments is considered, 12 (25.0%) undergraduate students and the marginally lower figure of 11 (22.9%) postgraduates, found reading for assignments 'very or quite difficult', together totaling some 23 (47.9%). A further 4 undergraduates (8.3%) and 21 post-graduates (43.8%), in total 25 (52.1%), maintained however, that they found this 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. It must be borne in mind that in addition to the different format of an assignment in Australia, the time taken to source, read and understand material in English, may be significantly more time consuming and potentially more difficult than the students had expected.

5) Writing assignments

After reading for and planning the assignment writing will commence, involving structuring and organisation skills, making judgments and developing arguments. An ability to master these skills is critical for academic success. It is also important that the students understand that other authors' thoughts or comments must be attributed to the original author. Writing assignments requires the students to research, conceptualize, and write the assignment in a textual framework that conforms to Australian academic models (see Fallon 2008; Kubota 1992; Morley-Warner 2000).

Comments made by the students in the questionnaire and semi-structured interview suggest that writing assignments was significantly more difficult than these results to specific questions would suggest, particularly since, in Japan, the format employed in an assignment is quite different to that in Australia with the result coming first, which is then discussed, rather than the introduction, body of the text and conclusion as required in Australia (see Kubota 1992). The students therefore have to frame and write their assignments in a way significantly different to that in Japan. For 16 of undergraduate respondents (32%) and 22 of postgraduates (44%), 38 (76%) overall, writing was found to be 'very or quite difficult'. However, 1 (2.0%) undergraduate and 11 (22%) postgraduates, 12 (24%) overall, indicated that this was 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'.

It would appear for these respondents that, overall, the easiest task is understanding the assignment, followed by reading for the assignment, and finally writing it. For the postgraduate level students, all aspects of study do appear to be somewhat easier, although this is relative and to be expected. However, as the results of this research appear to demonstrate, tertiary studies for both the undergraduate and postgraduate cohorts do involve potentially important problems for a substantial proportion. As assignments in Australia are a significant component of assessment in Australian, being able to at least demonstrate levels of competency, quite apart from mastery, of these important skills is critical and being prepared for them before course commencement in Australia of considerable importance.

6) Understanding what your lecturers mean

Understanding what lecturers mean requires the student to have a relatively clear understanding of the lecturer's academic and socio-cultural expectations and requirements. This pertains to both in class and out of class interaction and may require the students to seek further clarification should comprehension not be clear due to linguistic or socio-educational differences.

Some 9 responding undergraduates (19.2%) and 8 postgraduates (17.0%), some 17 (36.2%) overall, maintained that they found this ‘very or quite difficult’. However, a further 7 (14.9%) of undergraduates, and the much higher figure of 23 (48.9%) post-graduates, maintained that this was ‘not particularly difficult, quite or very easy’. Overall therefore, some 30 (63.8%) maintained that this learning skill was ‘not particularly difficult, quite or very easy’.

Understanding what lecturers mean is critically important for academic success at all levels of study, yet overall, 17 out of 47 responding students appear to have found ‘Understanding what lecturers mean’ difficult. It is also possible the four non-respondents were saving face by not responding. Listening in the academic environment can be challenging in one’s own language, but for non-native speakers of English there are two issues, relating firstly to understanding the content of the presentation, and secondly to the presentation itself, which may be at a linguistic speed somewhat faster than the student is accustomed to, or which may be presented by a non-native speaker of English with an accent and intonation patterns unfamiliar to the student. The latter is the reality in multicultural Australia, particularly the university sector. Understanding what lecturers mean in Japan tends to lack importance, since academic success is virtually guaranteed after gaining entry to university (see Chapter 2).

Processes in Learning

1) Explaining in English what you know in Japanese

As a way of assessing the frustration of students, the questionnaire asked about the difficulty of explaining in English what they knew in Japanese. This involves not just language skills, but also requires interpretation and conceptualization of the theme, or the transfer of ideas from one’s first language to a second language, requiring the students to have a sound linguistic ability in that second language. This task can be extremely difficult to undertake, where nuance and socio-cultural issues may prevent clear articulation of thoughts and ideas.

Overall, the key finding pertaining to this learning skill, reported in Table 26 (b) appears to be that whereas 10 (21.2%) undergraduate respondents found this ‘very or quite difficult’, 14 postgraduate respondents (29.8%) also found this skill ‘very or quite difficult’, thus, overall, 24 (51.1%) found explaining in English what they knew in Japanese ‘very or quite difficult.’ A further 6 (12.8%) undergraduates and 17 (36.2%) post-graduate respondents, maintained that they found this skill ‘not particularly difficult, quite or very easy’, 23 (48.9%) in total. The reasons for these findings are potentially complex in that this might relate to a lack of formal language training prior to the commencement of their program, or, since 64.7% were postgraduate students, it is possible that some of the masters level students were undertaking

research degrees, and thus they and the doctoral level students may, prior to arrival, have had few opportunities to explain in English, phenomena that they knew and were comfortable discussing in Japanese, and thus were not fully aware of the significant difficulties when discussing the same phenomena in English. It may be that special programs are required, particularly at the commencement of the international research students' courses, to better assist with language/communication skills, rather than assume that these skills have been acquired as well they might by students progressing from undergraduate studies.

2) Asking questions in tutorials

Asking questions in tutorials requires the students to consider the purpose of the question, frame the question and subsequently ask the question. Understanding the subsequent response requires a conceptual as well as a linguistic understanding. The greatest socio-cultural difficulties for Japanese students when asking questions in tutorials is firstly framing the question, followed by the confidence to produce the utterance, linked with the issue of saving 'face' should a linguistic or comprehension-based mistake be made. The second issue is the culturally different learning environment that the Japanese students came from and have framed their expectations in, one where '*Japanese students don't ask questions*' (Nakajima 2004).

Whereas asking questions in a tutorial was viewed as 'very or quite difficult' for some 10 (20.4%) undergraduate students and 14 (28.6%) postgraduate students, 24 (49.0%) in total, the skill was seen as 'not particularly difficult' for 6 (12.2%) undergraduates and a further 19 (38.8%), postgraduates. Thus overall, this skill was viewed as being 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy' for some 25 (51.0%) of respondents.

These results may directly reflect the Japanese scenario where students are not expected to ask questions, with furthermore the results potentially relating to 'face' being saved. It must also be borne in mind when considering these results, that the concept of tutorials following the Australian model, does not exist in Japan, thus the research students, and depending upon their particular program, the course work masters students, may not have experienced tutorials prior to coming to Australia.

3) Discussing studies with Australian students

Discussing studies with Australian students requires the student to articulate their position regarding a specific topic, requiring them to consider the appropriate language to use and to be able to 'take turns' in speaking – tasks that the Japanese students may have had no experience in carrying out. A significant number of undergraduate students 14 (28.6%) and 17 (34.7%)

postgraduate students, 31 (63.3%) in all, found this skill 'very or quite difficult' However a further 2 (4.1%) of undergraduate respondents and 16 (32.6%) postgraduates, some 38.7% (18) overall, found discussing studies with Australian students to be 'not particularly difficult, very or quite easy'.

These quantitative results from the questionnaire do not necessarily reflect comments made by the students in other sections of the questionnaire and/or semi-structured interview, where interaction with Australian students was viewed as very difficult. This may pertain to a range of issues such as the language ability of the Japanese students, or shyness preventing articulation of thoughts or ideas, or being somewhat in conflict with the requirements of discussion with Australian students who may furthermore use language unknown to the Japanese students. The Australian students themselves may furthermore not be as patient with the Japanese students as the latter would like to be the case, or may be from non-English speaking backgrounds themselves with accents and pronunciation patterns unfamiliar to the Japanese students. This may potentially impact upon comprehension leading to effective learning being hindered through perceived or real communication issues. Since some of the postgraduate cohort were undertaking doctoral level programs, it is also possible that this sub-cohort had little interaction with many other students on campus.

4) Group work

Group work requires a confidence in one's linguistic ability and the ability to demonstrate skills such as turn-taking, expressing an opinion and responding to an utterance in an appropriate time frame. This important skill was found to be 'very or quite difficult' by 10 (20.8%) undergraduates, and the same number (10) of postgraduate level respondents, 20 (41.6%) overall. However, whereas some 6 undergraduates (12.6%) maintained that they found this 'not particularly difficult quite or very easy', the higher figure of 22 postgraduates (45.8%) indicated the same. Overall some 28 respondents (58.4%) maintained that they found this 'not particularly difficult quite or very easy'. What is unknown, when interpreting these results, is the extent to which the students were active rather than passive participants in group work, since typically, this form of study is not common in Japan. As one student wrote in the open-ended section of the questionnaire:

'In Australia you are expected to speak and tell your opinions in the class but in Japan we just sit and take notes in the class. When speaking English is hard enough telling your opinion is unbelievably difficult.' (Student#21)

5) Talking to lecturers

Talking to lecturers requires students to approach an academic staff member and to explain the purpose of a proposed meeting or interaction, something that the student may find difficult, requiring as it does clarity of purpose, linguistic ability and interpersonal skills. The academic level of the staff member may also be relevant with those more senior being approached in a more formal way than more junior staff reflecting the Japanese norm (see Chapter 2).

For 8 (17.0%) undergraduates and 6 (12.8%) post-graduates, overall 14 (29.8%), talking to lecturers was seen as 'very or quite difficult'. However 7 undergraduates (14.9%), and the significantly greater figure of 26 postgraduates (55.3%), indicated that they found this 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. Combined the figures indicated that some 33 (70.2%) of respondents maintained that found talking to lecturers 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. These results may reflect the less formal relationship between academic staff and students in Australia. Interestingly, results pertaining to talking to lecturers indicate that the postgraduate students find this skill significantly easier than the undergraduate cohort. This may suggest that the postgraduate students who had already experienced tertiary studies in Japan were in fact perhaps better prepared for such interlocution. It must also be borne in mind that a number of the postgraduate students were undertaking research degrees, and thus would have significantly more interaction with academic staff than the undergraduate or coursework masters level students. Further research may clarify this.

6) Finding information in the library

To find information in the library one needs to know the purpose behind the need for the information, and how to source that material. This requires an understanding of the structure of a library and how to locate material relating to specific disciplines. Finding information in the library was assessed as 'very or quite difficult' for some 6 undergraduates (12.5%), and 5 postgraduates (10.4%), 11 respondents (22.9%) overall. However for a further 10 undergraduates (20.8%), and the significantly higher figure of 27 postgraduates (56.3%), overall some 37 respondents (77.1%) maintained that this was 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'.

These results may need to be read with caution; personal experience by the researcher demonstrates that, despite often enviable university library facilities in Japan, such services are not always well used by tertiary level students, particularly at the undergraduate level, with this perhaps reflecting the more non-academic nature of Japanese undergraduate level programs. The postgraduate students, a significant number of whom were undertaking research degrees, certainly did appear to be more comfortable finding information in the library (see above).

7) Using the internet

The internet plays an important role in education requiring the students to have the ability to source electronic material for assignments or engage in other academic activities. Using the internet was found to be 'very or quite difficult' for 4 (8.2%) undergraduates but no postgraduates. For 13 (26.5%) undergraduates and the significantly higher figure of 32 (65.3%) postgraduates, totaling 45 (91.8%), this was viewed as being 'not particularly difficult'. What is unknown is the time required by the students to source the information that they required, and whether or not it was initially sourced in the English language, or in Japanese for greater ease of comprehension. It would appear, despite the apparently highly technologically advanced Japanese society, that it cannot be assumed all students from there are competent in internet research skills.

Socio-Cultural Issues

1) Developing a relationship with lecturers

Developing a relationship with academic staff at the undergraduate level requires students to feel sufficiently confident in their English to approach the staff member, and to recognize that, unlike in the Japanese university system, Australian academic staff, for the most part are genuinely interested in their students. At the postgraduate level, particularly doctoral and research masters level, this relationship is critical. Clear channels of communication where both student and lecturer can interact freely are imperative to the development of a strong relationship. The very concept of developing a relationship with an academic staff member may be quite threatening to a Japanese student who typically may not have experienced such a relationship in Japan. Surprisingly, as Summary Table 26(c) reveals, whereas 10 undergraduate students (20.8%) maintained that they found this 'quite or very difficult', a further 10 postgraduate students (20.8%) indicated that they also felt that this skill was 'quite or very difficult', thus some 20 respondents (41.7%) do appear to have found the development of such a relationship difficult. However these figures must be viewed in light of 6 undergraduates (12.6%) and some 22 postgraduates (45.8%), together 28 (58.3%), maintaining that this skill was 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'.

When developing a relationship with lecturers is considered, the entire cohort of respondents appear to have found, what may have been perceived as a less structured and perhaps more casual relationship, more difficult than the academic issues themselves. This may relate directly to the expectation of a more structured and hierarchical relationship between students and academic staff as is the case in Japan. These issues were raised in the semi-structured interview

with some students commenting that initially they did not know how to address and interact with Australian academic staff. One participating undergraduate student did indicate that when it was necessary to visit an academic staff member's office, the individual would immediately check the 'ranking' of the staff member, Lecturer or Professor, etc., prior to knocking on the door as a guide to interaction (*Student #81*). This may be linked directly, albeit in the Japanese context, to *keigo* indicating the formality of the language to be used and degree of deference to be shown.

Whereas the undergraduate students were studying at the tertiary level for the first time, the postgraduate cohort had already undertaken tertiary studies in Japan, however some of the undergraduate students expressed similar sentiments to the older, and perhaps more experienced, postgraduate level students. Comments made by students in both the questionnaire and semi-structured interview focused upon the apparently unexpected, positive relationships they enjoyed with their supervisors. It is conceivable that due to the more formal relationship with Japanese academic staff, the responding students may have required some time to feel comfortable in the Australian teaching and learning environment, including the way that academic staff and students interact and particularly, the use of first names. This does not happen in Japan, all academic staff being addressed as '*sensei*' [teacher].

2) Developing a relationship with other students

Developing a relationship with other students most probably requires Japanese students to take initiative and approach an Australian student. This may be quite outside a Japanese student's comfort zone, and may also have been difficult for the individual in Japan. Table 26 (c) reveals that some 8 undergraduate respondents (16.3%) found this to be 'very or quite difficult' as did 5 postgraduates (10.2%), together, 13 respondents (26.5%) in total. However a further 9 undergraduates (18.4%) and 27 postgraduates (55.1%), 36 (73.5%) overall, maintained that this was 'not particularly difficult, quite or very easy'. This finding may be important given the expectation held by some of the students of developing relationships with Australian students, particularly those of a *kohai/sempai*, [junior/senior] nature as would be the case were the student be undertaking tertiary studies in Japan.

Overall, these findings pertaining to academic learning problems encountered by these Japanese students appear to be of considerable importance for universities planning for effective learning by Japanese students in the Australian context. A reasonably large proportion of the postgraduate students, having already undertaken a tertiary level program in Japan, did not appear to find tertiary learning/study skills in Australia appreciably easier than the undergraduate cohort. There would appear to be two distinct sets of issues that are evident in this analysis of the learning

problems of these students. One relates to the level of preparation and understanding of the academic study and cultural requirements of the course that they were about to enroll in, while the second relates to the adequacy of English language skills that enrolling universities have set for such students. The following sections further explore the issues arising from these.

Preparation for study in Australia: Reading and talking to other students

Results from the sections of the questionnaire that sought to discover what these Japanese students had done to prepare themselves for their overseas study also produced some unexpected findings. Commonsense alone would appear to indicate that substantial research and preparation is necessary before undertaking study in a different culture and country. Overall, findings, that indicate that this did not occur, raise the question as to why not. Results in Table 12(a) reveal that while some 23 respondents (45%) maintained that they had read ‘a lot, quite a lot, or a reasonable amount’ in order to be better prepared for their academic program; however some 28 (54.9%) indicated that they had read ‘not much or none at all’. What could not be ascertained in this preliminary study was the nature of the material read. It is likely that what was read pertained to Australia itself and the tourism industry, rather than to tertiary studies material which may have been linguistically accessible to the students, but conceptually inaccessible.

Students were subsequently asked in Question 13(a) if their reading had assisted in terms of their preparation for study overseas, Table 13(a) reports that the relatively low figure of 16 respondents (31.3%) had felt that this was the case, with a further 24 respondents (47.0%) indicated that it had not helped. The nature of the reading and the specific source(s) of information obtained are not known and it must be borne in mind that there was no discernable evidence from this cohort of students of their having sought professional assistance when planning their overseas study.

Question 13(b) considered the reasons given by the students for having read and why the reading had, or had not, helped them. Table 13(b) reports that 8 students (21.6%) maintained that they had read to learn about university life, with 7 respondents (18.9%) indicating that they had read to assist their reading skills, vocabulary and English. In essence only 8 students (21.6%) indicated in Table 13(b) that they had read specifically to learn about university life in Australia. Although a further 4 students (10.8%) indicated that they had read to learn about different institutions and differentiate between them, no information was obtained regarding the decision-making process. It does appear that 15 students (51.3%) may have read something in order to prepare for their program. A further 7 students (18.9%), indicated that they had read to assist their reading skills thus potentially aiming to enhance both their reading ability and vocabulary. The actual subject matter of their reading however, is unknown. Three further students (8.1%)

commented that they had been unable to source the information they had required. Given the dearth of information available in Japan regarding the Australian tertiary education sector, outside of commercial agents and Australian Education International based in the Australian Embassy, this is to be expected. Four respondents (10.8%) commented that reading was of no use, pointing out that the experience was personal. This conclusion may have been arrived at through hard personal experience.

The responses to these questions were somewhat unexpected. The questions were asked since personal experience by the researcher suggested that Japanese people would typically undertake significant research in a situation where there were 'unknowns', frequently engaging, in the case of overseas studies, the assistance of educational agents who organize the application, acceptance, visa and all other related points. However the apparent lack of evidence of such involvement, and the dearth of significant reading to better understand the Australian educational system, points to students who were ill-informed, yet who were prepared to spend significant amounts of money on something that they were unfamiliar with, and had undertaken little research better to understand.

Another major source of information is asking other people who may have relevant experience. In relation to questions asking who they had spoken to and what they had been told, results in Table 8(a) indicate that a substantial number of students, some 40 respondents (78.4%), had spoken to other Japanese students who had, or were, currently studying in Australia at the tertiary level. This is to be expected and may be seen as replicating the *kohai /sempai* relationship where the senior advises the junior. A further 9 students (17.6%) however had not sought advice through such a channel and thus their source of information is unknown. Since relatively few Japanese academic staff are familiar with the Australian educational system, students seeking guidance in Japan prior to overseas study in Australia, may not have had their needs met, the majority of Japanese academic staff educated overseas having studied in the USA. Results in Table 1(b) indicate that 6 students had a family member who had studied overseas, with this being revealed in Table 1(c) as being a brother or sister who had studied in Australia, New Zealand, USA or Canada. This small number of students would almost certainly have received more accurate and relevant advice. In addition, results in Table 2(a) indicate that 5 students had studied at high school in English speaking countries, 3 in Australia, and one each in New Zealand and USA, with this experience likely to provide a good understanding of learning in an English speaking context.

What the students were told by the more experienced students is revealed in Table 8(b), with the majority of students, 34 (56.5%), being told that studying in Australia was '*tough, hard*', and

that *'students must study hard.'* This is to be expected when students are studying in an education system different to their own. However, the way in which this was interpreted by the researched cohort is unknown, as is whether or not the students did in fact discuss in greater detail the need for specific learning attributes that would assist in the Australian learning environment. Due to cultural values and conditioning, it is unlikely that this occurred, since a student indicating that the program was difficult is a student losing 'face' in Japanese cultural terms. Certainly the self-reported learning difficulties discussed in detail above, on skills that form the basis for success in the Australian academic context, would not appear to have been part of the discussions, or it is likely that there would have been better preparation. On the other hand, if there had been additional discussion on learning skill issues, there was certainly no evidence of this in comments by students in either the questionnaire or semi-structured interviews.

Cram school as the basis of preparation for Australian university study

It is possible that the students surveyed, interpreting their future adventure through a Japanese cultural lens, regarded their preparation at cram school (*juku*), high school and university in Japan as sufficient preparation for study in the Australian context. Study at a *juku* is, after all, largely considered a normal part of preparation for university entry in Japan (see Chapter 2). Results in Table 15(a) indicated that 28 respondents (58.9%) had attended a *juku*. When asked if this had helped them, results in Table 15 (b) reveal that 21 (41.1%) indicated that it had not, while 8 (15.6%) thought that it had. When further asked about the reasons why *juku* had not helped prepare for studies in Australia, 23 responses (69.9%) indicated that the study method was different. When questioned on how they felt that their high school or university experiences in Japan had prepared them for tertiary studies in Australia, results in Table 3(a) indicated that 31 (60.7%) considered it helped 'a little or not at all', in comparison to the 19 (37.2%) who considered that it had prepared them 'very or quite well'.

From these responses, collected within the first semester of studies, it is apparent that many students were now recognizing that there were substantial differences between study in Japan and Australia. While the study was unable to research the issues more fully, it is possible that the approximately 40% who had not attended cram school were either very capable students or rejected the usefulness of cram school completely. It is also possible that some of these students saw Australian as a different, and possibly easier, entry into university. It was not considered culturally appropriate to ask whether respondents had failed university entry tests in Japan; future research might attempt to uncover this potentially important, but culturally sensitive, information.

Exploring an Australian campus and auditing lectures as a basis for understanding possible difficulties

A more direct way of exploring the issues likely to be encountered in an Australian university would be to visit the university and audit some lectures. A starting point also might be visiting a Japanese university and auditing a lecture there. Although not all students had undertaken tertiary studies in Japan, some 40 (78.4%) respondents had visited a Japanese university campus and 36 (70.5%) had listened to a lecture [Table 5(b)]. However it does not appear that there was any awareness that a lecture in English at an Australian university in specialist areas might be somewhat different.

To explore what the students may have thought before embarking upon their educational adventure, they were asked about what they thought might be the differences between Japanese and Australian campuses. Question 6(a) explored the students' thoughts whilst still in Japan regarding their future Australian campus, with them being asked to select from a range of statements the one most reflecting their personal view. Table 6(a) reveals that some 27 respondents (52.9%) felt that the campus would be 'nothing like a Japanese campus'. What they expected specifically is not known. A further 14 (27.4%) agreed that it would 'Look the same but feel different'. Once more, no information was provided that indicated the way in which it was expected to 'feel different'. Table 6(a) reveals further that 2 respondents (3.9%) agreed that it would 'Look different but feel the same'. How it would look different is unknown. Some 8 respondents (15.6%) suggested that it would be 'as in Japan, or similar to as in Japan'. Despite the fact that only 8 respondents considered the universities in Japan and Australia to be similar, little evidence was obtained to suggest that the vast majority of students had, in any meaningful way, explored the differences of the Australian university to which they were going and what they could expect in the way of learning challenges.

Results in Table 7(a) in reveal that some 30 students (58.8%) had visited an Australian university campus prior to enrollment, although a further 20 (39.2%) had not. Data in Table 7(b) however reveals that, while 22 students (41.3%) had sat in on a lecture prior to enrollment, 28 students (54.9%) had not. Thus the majority of those students visiting an Australian university campus prior to enrollment had not audited a lecture. Results in Table 7(c), relating to those who had tried to listen to the lecture, indicate that some 20 students (80%) maintained that they had tried to do this. A further 4 (16.0%) had not tried to listen. Given that there is discrepancy in these figures regarding who had audited a lecture and who had tried to listen, it is possible that there was some confusion in a few students' minds about when they sat in and tried to listen to a lecture. The academic focus of the lecture(s) audited is unknown. By having audited a lecture,

students would potentially have had a clearer idea of the lecture format in Australia and possibly be better prepared for participation in this important learning and teaching environment and associated tutorials. There is however no evidence that this was the case.

Of those who had tried to listen to the lecture, Table 7 (d) reveals that only 3 (8.8%) of respondents agreed with the statement: 'It was really easy for me to follow so I was not worried.' Results in Table 7(d) also reveal that many of the respondents could not understand the lecture easily, or at all. It must be borne in mind, however, that the audited lecture may not have assisted, if the academic nature of the lecture did not pertain to the auditing student's discipline.

Substantial personal challenge: The hero's journey?

Overall the results in this study reveal that very little adequate preparation for study in a foreign (Australian) culture in a new educational system had taken place, except for possibly a small minority of students. The section on the personal reasons for choosing Australia as a study destination in Chapter 2 referred to the Japanese cultural issue of a personal challenge, as well as reference to Hart's (1999) work on *The Intercultural Sojourn as the Hero's Journey*. Given the apparently personal interest, self-development, non-educational reasons for study in Australia for two-thirds of the respondents, coupled with the lack of preparation for study, these two explanations in combination appear to be the explanation of why these students have chosen Australia with a different culture, and certainly substantial challenges. The desire to learn more about the Australian culture and learn better English, in line with Japanese government policies (Kubota 2002), would also seem to form part of complex personal motivations and reasoning certainly involving challenges. Given the lack of detailed preparation for this overseas sojourn, it is not possible to do anything else but admire the courage, optimism, and possibly innocence, displayed in the belief that personal knowledge and advancement will occur. In relation to these elements though, there is a degree of 'placing one's self into the care of the gods', and an incredible faith that all will turn out well despite a process substantially testing the mettle of the individual. (See Hart 1999, and Chapter 2).

Given that data indicate that Japanese students make up one of the largest sources of international students world-wide, there may be culturally specific, Japanese adolescent-early adulthood rites of passage that underlie the findings obtained in this study. Changes in employment for life opportunities and an apparent yearning for happiness rather than job security (Mathews 2004) may be related to this. Certainly in western cultures adolescence-early adulthood is seen as time of considerable personal development and change, while culturally specific rites of passage occur in many societies (see Berger 2005; Craig 1999; Lefrancois 1999; Mussen et al 1965). Further research is required into what appears to be continuation of a liberal

education and personal development tradition, when much of the developed world has moved to specific, career-focused tertiary education. The Japanese cultural traditions involving Confucian and Taoist ideals of becoming, along with socially responsible and moral behaviour that are deeply entwined and part of these belief systems (see Chapter 2), would also appear to be factors here.

Results in Tables 19 (bi-iii), 19(c), 22 (e) and 25 (b) indicate that there are potentially issues of mental health and depression that need to be considered by universities, if the challenges should prove too great or there is failure. It should be noted in reading the results in these tables that there are considerable numbers who have not responded, quite possibly because the issues raised are too personal and threatening. Having encouraged international students to enroll and consciously developed a higher education industry around a marketisation model, universities would appear to owe a duty of care, and certainly have moral/ethical obligations to these students under the ESOS Act.

Coping strategies identified by the Japanese students

When problems arise when students are enrolled in either undergraduate or postgraduate studies, students need to be able to first be able to recognize that a problem exists but then, importantly, be knowledgeable about coping strategies to help deal with the problem(s). Results obtained in this research indicate that the Japanese students had coping strategies derived from Japanese cultural values. These would be certainly satisfactory in the Japanese cultural setting, but are not likely to be effective in Australian university culture where the support mechanisms are different. These results also generally revealed that students were not aware of existing academic support services. Question 23 (a) in the questionnaire asked students how they would deal with problems. Results in Table 23(a) reveal that some 27 respondents (38%) would '*Consult friends and classmates*'. It is unknown whether the student(s) expected Australian classmates to assist, or whether the expectation was of the Japanese students developing a learning circle to assist each other, thus replicating 'the group', although, this may be prevented due to issues of 'face'. A further 19 students (26.7%) indicated that they would '*Do my best/study hard*'. Doing one's best however may not achieve the desired results if the learning problem itself cannot be identified. A further 5 students (7.0%) indicated that they would '*Work on English Language*', although if English Language is not the key issue in the problem, this in fact may not assist in solving the problem.

While 4 respondents (5.6%) indicated that they would '*Consult counsellor/staff at uni*', it is unknown whether or not this did occur, and the academic outcome. Some 19 respondents indicated that they would *gambaru* (do their best), although once more the learning problem may

not be solved by doing one's best if the problem itself has not been identified. Some 4 respondents (5.6%) indicated that they would '*Try to understand the culture and fit in, not take it as personal, talk to seniors*'. This comment reveals the expectation of support provided by senior students, thus replicating the Japanese norm. It is unknown whether the students were in fact able to find supportive seniors and whether they could assist. While these students did appear to have a better understanding of issues around cultural appropriateness and conflict, they have chosen to see it through a traditional Japanese culture lens, not unexpectedly. Seven respondents indicated that they would consult the course coordinator or a lecturer, with this having possibilities for identifying and solving the problem(s).

Some 3 respondents (4.2%) appeared to have no strategies in place. One further student (1.4%) indicated that they would use the library. It is unknown in what way the library was expected to assist. A further student (1.4%) indicated that he/she would contact friends in Japan. It is unknown how this was expected to assist, but may have been linked to *amae* (dependency).

There was also some evidence of students seeking other support, but this does appear generally to be confined to other Asian students:

'Asian friends have similar concepts even if they are from different countries because they all come from a Confucian Heritage background. They have similar concepts such as a hierarchical culture even though they have different thoughts. The only difference in some ways is that the Japanese economy is more developed.' (Student #60)

'When I don't understand the concept, I talk to students and other friends. These friends are mainly Asian Australians who I hang out with. It is a little embarrassing because they are younger than me. There is another Japanese student in my course but he is male and this stops me from asking for help. I feel a slight Caucasian phobia - an inferiority complex and Caucasian Australians are a little intimidating.' (Student #81)

Other Asian students, themselves unfamiliar with the Australian academic context, may be experiencing the same issues and thus unable to provide the academic support required. It is unknown whether students #60 and #81 were able to receive the academic and emotional support through their respective groups, or through strategies Japanese students proposed as above, and in either case how successful those strategies were.

Together, these findings regarding coping strategies, and specifically the lack of effective ones in many cases, highlight the importance of really effective introductory sessions being provided for incoming Japanese students. These need to highlight availability of effective support services, and the expectation that these will be used, given the challenges being faced by international

students in a different cultural context. That is quite apart from specialist training in the academic skills required for success in the Australian academic context. The cultural differences need to be bridged through an understanding of what these are. Before commencement of studies the students themselves do not, and probably cannot, know these things as their awareness of the cross-cultural differences, as revealed by this research, is so relatively unsophisticated in many cases. Also important in these sessions will be universities engaging in the management of unrealistic expectations that are based on the values of Japanese culture that have emerged through this research into these Japanese students' expectations (see below).

Problems with English language usage and proficiency

Many of the specific learning problems identified in the earlier sections of this chapter, and summarized in Tables 26 (a-c), relate to English language proficiency as much as to deficiencies in academic skills needed for success in the Australian university context. This is a difficult issue because of the strength and prevalence of the marketisation model. Existing standards, set for IELTS and other, similar tests like TOEFL, are not seen as appropriate given the above research concerns, and the fact that these tests are averages across several English language skill components. Irrespective of where the student(s) had undertaken their language training, without having attained the required IELTS level, typically an overall score of 6, with a minimum requirement in each of the four macro-skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking), they would not have attained entry into their institution of choice. The adequacy of this level is debatable with a number of commentators publicly questioning the nexus between international student fees and the students' English language levels (see Alexander 2007; Jopson & Burke 2005).

The problem of insufficient English language skills by international students has been officially recognized for several years, but no concrete government actions have been initiated to remedy the problem (Birrell 2006). Birrell and Healy's (2008) recent research has revealed the lower standards achieved by international students when tested in the real world of work via their consequent failure to be able to obtain employment in their specialist areas commensurate with their qualifications (see Chapter 1). Such outcomes are not conducive to the development and maintenance of the higher education industry in Australia. Nor do they serve the interests of students who enrol believing, that when they graduate, they will have achieved appropriate English language skills, since they will have passed and achieved an Australian degree.

Owens (2005, p261), having engaged in action research with academic and academic support staff involved with large numbers of international students, concluded that: '*An independent internal English language testing system was thought to be appropriate but unattractive to*

institutions seeking to enrol from the international student market'. Sawir (2005) has argued that the traditions of English language teaching prevalent in much of Asia constitute a serious problem to which there is no easy solution. This is because it is focused upon grammar and vocabulary learning, rather than functional performance and skills related to real life, interactive English language usage. Where students have studied, the type of institution and the duration of study appear to be important related matters in the development of sufficient English language proficiency.

Results in Table 4(a) present the countries where students had studied English in preparation for their academic program of study, with these revealing that 31 respondents (52.5%) had studied in Australia, with 17 (28.8%) undertaking language training in Japan. It is unknown how many of the students undertaking language training in Australia undertook programs focusing upon academic English, specifically in preparation for their subsequent tertiary level program, since the difference between such an academically-oriented program and learning conversational English is significant, with the former appreciably assisting the students' academic progress. The final academic outcomes of students undertaking Academic English courses prior to tertiary level studies, when compared to students undertaking more conversational English programs, may be worthy of future research.

The type of language institution where language training had taken place is also of importance. Results presented in Table (4b) reveal that some 12 respondents (32.4%) had studied at the language school belonging to another university, whereas 6 respondents (16.2%) had studied at the language school associated with their subsequent university. In both instances, if the student had enrolled into an academic English program, it is possible that they would have audited at least one lecture as part of their program. However, some 13 individuals (35.1%) had studied in a private language school. This may well have been a financial decision, university owned language schools typically being more expensive than many private schools. Some private language colleges do not focus specifically upon academic English, or specific pre-tertiary language training and often cannot, unlike a university owned language school, provide experience of, for example, the lecture environment, nor assist with the transition from the small classroom environment of 15 students to the lecture theatre of 150 students.

Whereas some 31 (52.5%) of the cohort had studied English in Australia, when the duration of study is considered, in light of the depth of language required to achieve effective results at the tertiary level in a language other than one's own, the linguistic demands do not appear to have been well understood by the cohort. The results in Table 4(e) reveal 18 students (35.2%) had only studied for up to six months, with a further 12 students (23.5%) studying for between 6 and

12 months. Furthermore, there is the lower than expected figure of 6 respondents (11.7%) indicating that they had studied for more than 12 months. This may reflect a real lack of understanding regarding the level of language competence required to successfully undertake tertiary studies in a language other than one's own. One student indicated that he/she had studied for just six weeks in order to prepare for the program, which although the student's language level at the commencement is unknown, is hardly likely to prepare the individual adequately for the linguistic requirements of an Australian tertiary level academic program, irrespective of the student's language level at commencement.

Regarding these findings, what is unknown, since this was beyond the scope of this research, is the real English language competency levels of the students prior to undertaking the language training. Regardless of that, difficulties revealed in study skills as self-reported by respondents themselves (see above), indicate levels achieved in many cases were inadequate to deal with ease with Australian university linguistic demands.

Foundations Studies programs were put in place at a number of Australian universities in order for students, who were not perceived as traditional entrants, better to familiarize themselves with university academic requirements. For students who are not native English speakers, such programs are also designed to increase academic English competence (Watson 2006). Results in this study, with this cohort of Japanese international students, revealed that these programs appear not to be functioning effectively, or in the ways intended. In response to the question whether they had undertaken a Foundations Studies program prior to tertiary studies, results in Table 2(b) revealed that 39 had not, 6 had, and 6 did not respond. Of the 6 who had undertaken Foundation Studies, Table 2(c) revealed that 4 had studied at an Australian university, while 2 had studied with a private provider. The low numbers indicating that they had undertaken such a program raised concerns that perhaps the respondents did not properly understand the intent of the question and what a Foundations Studies program was. Although this is an issue in interpreting the results, postgraduate students who made up two thirds of the respondents would not have been required to undertake such a program. That they experienced similar learning problems to the undergraduates indicates that the assumption that they do not require such a program is erroneous.

As attractive as the income from international students may be, failure by government and university authorities to grapple with the problem of inadequate English language skills prior to commencement of a course can only lead to further deterioration of Australian academic standards (see Birrell 2006; Birrell & Healy 2008; Burch 2008). In effect failure to demand higher levels of English study skill competence has the potential to destroy confidence in the

quality of Australian university qualifications and undermine the very lucrative higher education market. The indications of need for modification of the marketisation model were considered in Chapter 1; results from this study would appear to have produced additional evidence that this is required and English language standards of higher levels most probably need to be a part of the change.

University policies regarding Japanese international students

Regardless of the reasons that Japanese students enroll, Australian universities encourage them to enroll because the Australian government has policies deliberately encouraging development of this international student market, since it is a major export income earner. In any case, after enrollment Japanese students will *gambaru* (do their best), making them highly motivated students. The amounts of money that Japanese and other international students contribute to the Australian economy and higher education industry make their continued patronage an important issue (see Chapter 2). As indicated in Chapter 1, there are increasing signs that the current marketisation model is problematic, with lip-service given to meeting international students' needs, but little evidence that government or universities have determined student needs via specific, empirical needs analysis research as used in this study. The fall in the numbers of Japanese international students enrolled at Australian universities since 2006 indicates that there could be problems associated with the meeting of these students' needs. This research has revealed and identified very specific difficulties that many of these Japanese students face, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, many of which arise from cultural differences.

As Fallon (2008) has argued, understanding of specific, national, cultural differences is important in meeting student needs. Such understanding is essential for lecturers or academic support staff working in one-to-one contact when working on individual problems, just as it is important in attempting to tailor lecturing styles to ensure greater understanding by mixed Australian and international student audiences. These specific learning needs identified in this research, especially those summarized in Tables 26 (a-c), have the potential to form the basis for specific programs to prepare Japanese international students for their Australian university studies. Furthermore, it is almost certain that this can be done economically in major universities, with 178 Japanese students enrolled at the two universities that were involved in this research.

What needs to be considered carefully in terms of university policies is the effective preparation of Japanese international students for study and potential success in the Australian academic context now the challenges and difficulties in learning have been clearly identified. This assumes that the Japanese international student market is of value to Australia both culturally and in financial terms. There would appear to be a number of distinct phases that need to be considered.

The first involves the provision of appropriate information to students before they enroll so that the different requirements in Australian academic studies are spelled out. This would involve information both in English and Japanese and it needs to be accessible in the home country. A second phase would involve substantial, compulsory orientation programs for specific skill development before students undertake actual enrollment at a university, or immediately they do, and before the commencement of the academic course. At present there is little evidence of action regarding each of these two important requirements.

Introductory programs offered should involve screening through challenge tests so that those students, who may be Japanese nationals but who have developed satisfactory standards of skills across a range of academic tasks and requirements through study at Australian high schools, other university studies, and so on, are exempted. Certainly in the results reported in summary Tables 26 (a-c) there are wide variations in skill learning problems that are self-reported with some individuals indicating few problems with the skills identified. There is no point in having those who can demonstrate the skills having to undertake sections of programs unnecessarily. By the same token, it is necessary to objectively assess competency in these skills so that all those who cannot demonstrate competency in them do receive the kind of support to assist them in the different, and challenging cultural environment.

These sessions can also be used to ensure that students are familiar with the range of support services that exist in that university, understand that these services are confidential, and, most importantly are accessed by native speakers and so no loss of 'face' is involved in accessing these. Foundation Studies program at the universities are clearly intended to provide a variety of skills, although these have been conceived as multicultural in nature and have, to date lacked needs analysis research findings for different cultural cohorts. A range of specific strategies and methods, linked specifically to Japanese cultural values, are listed under recommendations in the next chapter.

Generally what needs to be implemented, albeit with specific reference to the learning needs of Japanese students identified in this study, has already been identified by lecturers and support staff concerned about the existing quality and nature of support offered to international students generally. Owens (2005, p256) recommended: *'teaching methods for culturally diverse students (should) include extensive introduction of new students into the Australian teaching and learning scenario, including the purpose and conventions of lecture and tutorial format, as well as assessment tasks'*. Owens also acknowledged that culturally effective teaching and learning strategies *'were recognized as time-consuming and resource intensive'* (Owens 2005, p256).

Managing unrealistic expectations

Not unexpectedly, given the fact that their expectations have been shaped by their experiences in Japanese society and culture, some of the expectations that the surveyed students expressed cannot be met realistically in the Australian academic context.

Results in Table 19(a i) indicate that 26 respondents (50.9%) expect their lecturer to spend as much time with them as needed when they have a problem with their studies, although 23 (45.0%) did not hold this expectation. When this was rephrased to ‘Do you expect your lecturers to spend little time with you when you have a problem?’, 19 respondents (37.2%) agreed with this, while 29 (56.8%) disagreed. In effect approximately the same number held the expectation that the lecturer would spend considerable time with them. Where direction to help when a student has a problem was concerned, results in Table 19 (a ii) indicate that 30 students (58.8%) held this expectation of lecturers while 17 (33.3%) didn’t. Table 19 (a vii) reveals that 24 students (47%) expected the lecturer to be interested in them as person while 25 (49%) didn’t. Table 19(a viii) indicates that 23 (45%) expected the lecturer to be interested in Japan with 26 (50.9) disagreeing with this proposition. With regard to sympathy being shown because the student was a non-native speaker of English, 20 (39.2%) held this expectation while 27 (52.9%) disagreed. These figures suggest that at least some students are aware of cultural differences and the inappropriateness of some of the expectations in the Australian context.

Universities in Japan involve many social activities and respondents were asked whether they expected lecturers to arrange social events for students. Results in Table 19 (a v) reveal that 18 (35.2%) expected this but 30 (58.8%) didn’t. Regarding advice on personal matters, Table 19 (a vi) reveals that 14 (27.4%) respondents expected lecturers to do this but 35 (68.6%) didn’t. That over a quarter did expect lecturers to give advice on personal matters, reveals the differences between Japanese and Australian culture on a issue like this. Concerning the issue of non-Japanese students initiating a conversation with the student on campus, 30 (58.8%) expected this although 14 (27.4%) of respondents didn’t. Given the shyness that Japanese students frequently exhibit, this is likely to not encourage Australian students to make contact, although clearly the Japanese students didn’t recognize this.

The concepts of *amae* and *giri*, which are foundational values to these expectations, are not ones familiar to most Australian academics. Probably more importantly, the demands on academics’ time mean they often do not have the time to cater for student needs and demands, even if they would like to. At Australian universities the ratio of lecturing staff to students has declined from the early 1990s, and demands upon academic staff to publish, engage in income-producing research and community activities have increased greatly. Japanese students are not to know

these things and so their expectations need to be managed when these exceed what would be regarded as the norm in Australia. Specific information sessions by universities are of course the means for such management to occur when explained in terms of cultural differences and different expectations.

The positive things that the Japanese students revealed about Australian universities, particularly the ease of study in Australia, suggest that there is basis of positive perception to work with in managing expectations. Table 22(a) reveals that 30 respondents (58.8%) found study easier in Australia than Japan, although 18 students (35.2%) did not respond to this. In Table 22(c) 37.2% of responses indicated that these students found lecturers easier to deal with than in Japan. Since some of the Japanese students' expectations cannot be met, because of Australian cultural values and conditions in universities, this management needs to take place in the specialist sessions that universities provide to Japanese students before they commence their studies in Australia. Such management will, if handled effectively, lead to fewer disappointments about the Australian university experiences, because awareness will have been created of specific cultural differences and practices.

Many of the comments that Japanese students wrote indicated that in their first term numbers of them recognized the very real and distinct cultural differences. Such comments include the following:

'Lecturers seem to like teaching; Japanese lecturers are not interested in teaching so here is good and easy to understand the subject.' (Student # 31)

'Japanese lecturers have no interest in teaching UG the reasons being that the students are not interested. If you send an e.mail to a Japanese professor few respond. They are very authoritarian and student[s] cannot demand.' (Students # 60)

'Lecturers are usually very well organised and easy to follow (as long as you are attentive).' (Students # 3)

'Japanese Universities seem more of an 'entertainment institution'. (XXX)University seems more academic.' (Student #18)

Appropriate information and skills assistance sessions, before commencement of their Australian studies, have the potential to make the learning in Australian universities somewhat easier for Japanese students than results in this research suggest is the case at present.

Limitations of this study and implications for future research

This study is very much a preliminary study in a number of ways. Its findings are in some ways also possibly limited to Japanese students studying at just two Australian universities, although the needs and expectations identified appear to be culturally-based and widely applicable to Japanese students at most, if not all, Australian universities. Furthermore, the research has involved self-report measures and it is probable that some respondents have over-estimated their capabilities when asked about difficulties with key learning study skills in the Australian context [eg see Tables 26 (a-c)]. This is understandable since respondents were surveyed as early in their first semester as possible, and they may not have received feedback on assignment tasks. What would be required to really determine levels of competency is to relate self-estimates to actual results attained in assignments and end of subject results.

The findings apply only to Japanese students studying at Australian universities. Quite different findings would be likely to emerge if the needs and expectations of Japanese students studying at Japanese universities had been examined. Indeed it is highly likely that the students who decide to study abroad have substantially different motives and needs to those who study in Japan.

What this research has revealed is only the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students in the early part of their study at an Australian university, indeed in their first semester. Tracing their successes and failures over the span of their entire period of study in a qualification would produce data on a wider range of important questions, not least being how many succeeded and how many failed to achieve their goals. The SBS (2008) series on students at Australian universities revealed the failure and disappointment of at least one Japanese student studying at the postgraduate level. The learning needs and culturally-founded expectations revealed and explored in this research are important in helping explain this. Nevertheless a longitudinal study may answer important questions such as how failure can be prevented/remedied by specific university policy changes and interventions of a carefully planned nature, as have been suggested above. (See also the specific recommendations in the next chapter that are closely linked to Japanese cultural values.)

This research has considered learning issues in a generic way, albeit allied to the skill development and socialization models rather than the more radical academic literacies model favoured by some (eg Lea & Street 2006). The approach adopted has proved useful as the findings of this research demonstrate, and at this early stage, macro-type research is important to identify the broader issues and problems. Potentially also very valuable would be examination of the skills that are needed in individual, specialist subject areas. Weinstein and Meyer (1991, 1994) indicate that, with cognitive learning skills and effective self-regulation of learning

processes, the characteristics of different knowledge bodies and discipline areas require different skills that are subject specific. Lea and Street (2006), from an academic literacies approach, also argue for recognition of different skills in different subject specializations. Such research has considerable implications for the actual practices of literacy, but needs to be conceived within a universities policy framework.

The absence of other, specific and detailed research into international Japanese learning needs and expectations at Australian universities was a constraint since there was little guidance available on methods to be used or specific questions to be asked. Although lower than optimal response rates from questionnaires and voluntary interviews were obtained, and are likely to be a persistent problem in research of this kind with Japanese students, this research has demonstrated that relatively rich data can be produced by combining these two methods. This is despite the fact that some English as a second language concerns are an ever present issue with both of these methods of data collection. However, when those who use these two methods have some familiarity with Japanese expectations and social forms used, as in this study, this is likely to assist in gaining useful, reliable and valid responses.

The students presented a wide range of learning deficiencies. Their areas of difficulty, often linguistic and social in nature could have been assisted by pre-program language training, although it does appear that since the students had attained sufficient English to socialize in Australia, they felt that this was enough. Whereas each had attained the institutional level of English required – using that English is another skill, one which for many did not appear to have been adequate. This could have been rectified to some degree through institutionally provided courses.

Additional areas of potentially valuable research not covered by this study

What would be immensely valuable would be longitudinal research that traced the learning development and associated frustrations through the course of their chosen qualification, be that undergraduate or postgraduate. What this research has managed to capture is only the reactions and concerns of Japanese students in the early part of their study at an Australian university, indeed in their first semester. Tracing their successes and failures over the span of their entire period of study would produce data on a wider range of important questions, not least being how many succeeded and how many failed to achieve their goals.

Areas for research suggested by some of the findings from this study might include:

- 1) Clear identification of expectations held by Japanese students regarding study in Australia, before embarking on enrollment, and what had formed those expectations, particularly those developed in preparation for tertiary studies.
- 2) The amount of reading undertaken in preparation for tertiary studies and the nature of the material read.
- 3) The level of English thought to be appropriate by students for tertiary level studies, and what awareness exists regarding the difference between studying English and studying in English.
- 4) Exploration of the numbers of students who undertake preparatory English for Academic Purposes (EAP,) and linked with this why so few students undertook EAP programs when such programs are specifically designed to assist non-native speakers of English undertake tertiary studies. In this, the factors of English language skills and effective learning skills need to be recognized as separate variables and controlled for in suitable ways.
- 5) The level of understanding held by the Japanese students of the Australian tertiary sector and the role that they would be expected to play in their own learning before attempting to enroll.
- 6) Fuller examination of the roles and influence played by parents, who would appear to provide much of the financial support to allow Japanese students to enroll as international students.

With this information, Australian educational institutions of all academic levels will be better placed to ensure that students have a clearer understanding of their role in their own education. Australian universities will be able to enunciate more precisely their expectations of students and thus potentially manage more effectively any unrealistic expectations.

Concluding remarks

Regardless of the outcomes of any future, additional research, this study has revealed the need for a serious reconsideration of the skills both undergraduate and postgraduate Japanese students bring with them to Australian universities. There appears to be clear needs for specialist pre-enrollment programs to ensure Japanese students have a better understanding of expectations of Australian universities. There is also a need for skill type programs to be available through semesters to assist Japanese students as they encounter academic literacy problems. Effective provision of services may well necessitate employing staff with some fluency in the Japanese

language. While this may entail additional costs, full fee paying international students should be entitled to additional services to support them through their adventurous challenges.

The majority of students participating in this research appear to have enrolled in university studies in Australia with little if any understanding of the process that they were to embark upon. Few had read in order to prepare, most had visited previously for chiefly recreational activities, and they appear to have assumed that their academic program would fall into the same category. The students were therefore, knowing no other, perhaps expecting a Japanese style education on an Australian beach. Many of the problems that they encountered are predictable: they are probably equally preventable with appropriate university policies in place to offer support.

While realistic recognition of Japanese cultural values, and the way these shape expectations and learning needs has been an important consideration underpinning this research, it would be dangerous and incorrect to read the findings and arguments in simply stereotypic terms. The finding that these Japanese international students chiefly are motivated to study in Australia for personal, individual development reasons cut directly across any stereotypic belief that citizens of this industrious, hardworking nation are simply group-oriented and concentrated upon work. The identification of specific learning challenges for Japanese students when they enroll in the different, Australian cultural context may be unsettling to those who would prefer not to recognize cultural differences so openly. Yet, failing to do so, allows universities to continue to pretend that the marketisation model is fine and working well.

Failure to recognize specific needs, that are culturally-related, also impedes the development of specific programs to assist international students meet the challenges that they have set themselves. Specific support programs may help ensure academic success, surely an important objective in enrollment, and possibly help the students to enjoy their international learning experience more. The existence of a copious literature developed over a long period, that has been based upon the interpretations of academics and support staff and involved the full range of international students, has failed to bring about any serious changes to the marketisation model (eg see Ballard 1987; Burke 1988; Phillips 1993; Owens 2005). It is likely that findings arising from more tightly focused, empirical analytic needs analysis research that has surveyed the students/clients/customers will be harder for government bureaucrats and university administrators to ignore, even if further research is required.

Successfully meeting the challenges created by the needs of these students coming from a distinctly different culture may offer the opportunity to expand an important market: Japanese students constitute one of the largest groups of international students who could potentially choose Australia for their studies. The existing marketisation model appears in need of change.

Foregrounding the needs of students would appear to offer the opportunity for change of the model and the possibility of attaining competitive advantage in the international education industry. After all, satisfaction of client needs has long been recognized as vital for continued success in any business.

CHAPTER SIX SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This research explored the learning needs and expectations of full fee paying Japanese international students in two Sydney universities through a questionnaire and supporting semi-structured interview in the important first six months of their study. Although seen as an exploratory study, given the lack of other relevant research to guide selection of methods and indicate possible findings, quite important results were obtained that appear to have substantial reliability, validity and also generalizability. The results obtained from 51 respondents to the questionnaire and 6 students involved in semi-structured interviews revealed surprises from an Australian academic perspective.

A considerable proportion of respondents were found to be postgraduate, despite the fact that the higher education market has been seen as chiefly an undergraduate one. More recent Australia Education International (2006-8) data have confirmed a trend to more postgraduate enrollments. When asked about the chief reason for coming to study at Australian universities, thirty per cent of respondents nominated educational reasons. Seventy percent of the students indicated personal reasons, relating mainly to having been attracted to Australia the country, its culture, and for some interests in English language acquisition as part of the cultural experience. That is to say most students, including postgraduates, appear to have been motivated by liberal education reasons that involved considerable elements of challenge in a different culture. Many students were found to have made visits to Australia before, some making multiple visits, suggesting that their tourism experiences had influenced them positively about Australia as a study destination.

Findings to questions concerning learning difficulties encountered in the Australian academic context revealed that a considerable proportion of both postgraduate and undergraduate students had difficulties with important, basic learning and study skills. These included listening to and understanding lectures, note taking in lectures, reading for assignments and writing assignments, as well as discussing studies with Australian students, and group work activities generally that required critical thinking and public advancement and support of arguments in classes and tutorials. Results from questions concerning confidence in expression of ideas in class or groups revealed that many students were not confident about their skills in these areas. Having grown up in the Japanese culture, which does not appear to strongly encourage individual, personal expression of ideas, or seem to value and encourage independent critical thinking, analysis and

reasoning at school and university, as the Australian academic context does, these findings were understandable.

Somewhat surprising were findings that few students had done much reading to learn about the differences and challenges that awaited them in Australian universities and Australian society, given the different cultural requirements and expectations. Many students had spoken to other Japanese students about study in Australia. Although often they were told that study in Australia would be difficult, there does not appear to have been much awareness that this would involve skills different to those they expected to encounter in Japan, or any real preparation for this. Only a relatively small number were found to have had relatives who had studied overseas, and while these students were probably better prepared for the realities they would encounter as students in Australia, the numbers who fell into this category were much smaller than had been anticipated, albeit without any substantial research underpinnings.

All students had met the enrolling universities' standard requirements on IELTS or TOEFL scores. However results revealed that most had studied English in specific preparation for their studies in Australia for relatively brief periods, periods that would appear to be far from adequate to prepare for study in English as distinct to study of English. This appeared linked to difficulties with learning and study skills where findings indicated that insufficient proficiency in English were imbedded in the learning and study difficulties. It should be noted however, that the study did not attempt to establish true levels of English competence or relate reported difficulties to actual academic outcomes achieved in assignments or passes in subjects. Future research is needed into these matters.

Overall, findings indicated that, as anticipated, students' learning needs and expectations had been framed in terms of their Japanese cultural experiences. Knowing no other, they assumed that the values, skills and approaches to learning that they had experienced in Japan would be the same in Australia. It would also appear from these findings that universities are not providing the kinds of support that these English as second language students need, nor the skill support to enable these students to deal better with the culturally different learning and study skill requirements. Results from later sections of the questionnaire indicated that mental health issues would also be possibly important for university authorities if they were to live up to the spirit of the ESOS Act of 2000.

Implications for university policies and support services

Given their contribution to the funding of Australian universities and contribution to the Australian economy more generally, it has been argued that a much more substantial proportion

of the fees paid by Japanese students, and those of other international students too, need to go towards specialist support services. This research has revealed very clearly that, having been educated in the Japanese culture, these students are generally not well prepared for the independence in study, critical thinking and analysis, development of personal opinions supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and the types of group work activities that characterise Australian academic culture. If the maintenance of the Japanese international student market is desired, and they certainly constitute one of the largest potential groups of students, universities need to prepare these students better for the realities of what they will encounter.

It is important in university policy terms to recognize that Japanese undergraduate and postgraduate students often have the same leaning/study problems as findings in this research indicate. At present there is almost certainly the assumption by university administrators that possession of an undergraduate degree means that appropriate learning skills for successful postgraduate study have been acquired as an undergraduate. However, if those undergraduate skills have been acquired in the Japanese university context, where different skills and approaches to learning are valued, this assumption becomes largely invalid in the Australian academic cultural context.

Problems in listening and understanding lectures, note taking in lectures, reading for assignments, writing assignments and discussing studies with Australian students were identified, along with problems in skills requiring active, public class/tutorial group contributions. It is quite possible that the problems, which were self-reported in the first semester of study, may actually be greater when assessed independently and more objectively. The detailed analyses of learning problems identified in the Results chapter, and discussed in detail in Chapter 5 with further analyses for postgraduate and undergraduate students, potentially provide substantial guidance on the skills and types of programs that need to be presented. As argued in the previous chapter, challenge tests designed to establish true levels of skill competence could be employed to exempt those students who can demonstrate that they do actually possess the required skills.

University policies need to be developed, in conjunction with specific information and skill development programs, to ensure that incoming Japanese students are well briefed on the different cultural expectations and provided with programs designed to develop the kinds of skills needed for success in the Australian context. Indeed correct information needs to be supplied to potential students before they embark on enrollment. Given the Japanese cultural liking for a challenge, this may be less of a deterrent or disincentive than marketing division staff

in universities may believe. The possibility of selling the acquisition of these important new skills for the Australian adventure in learning should perhaps also not be underestimated. The role of mentoring and support, which is part of Japanese culture, can easily be allied to such programs if there is sufficient cultural sensitivity in the policies developed. (See also specific recommendations incorporating Japanese cultural values below.) The numbers of Japanese students enrolled at the two universities involved in this study, 178, would indicate that they are large enough to make specific, introductory information and skill development programs economically feasible.

This research has revealed that some of the culturally-based expectations that the Japanese students bring with them, particularly those relating to an academic spending lots of time with a student until a problem is solved, or being able to solve many or most problems, are unrealistic in the current Australian academic context. The reasons are partially related to the pressures on academics in Australian universities to be productive in research publications, attract research funding, teach and engage in professional organisations and in community service. They are also related to differences in Australian academic role expectations and will not be solved by cultural sensitivity per se. The unrealistic expectations of Japanese students need to be managed by university authorities, through policies and specific information sessions that identify differences in cultural values and expectations, and what may be reasonably expected in universities in Australia compared with Japan.

Need for higher standards in English language competency for admission

English language skills and understanding of appropriate approaches to study and learning are factors combined in the self-reported learning problems revealed in this research. On evidence derived from this study, it appears that many of these students have inadequate English language skills, though sufficient to gain entry to Australian universities on existing standards of IELTS or TOEFL scores. The standards set for admission for these tests appear too low, a problem recognized since before 2006 (see Birrell 2006; Burch 2008). Results obtained in this study suggest that inadequate time was devoted to effective academic English skill acquisition in preparation for their international study sojourn by many of these students, although the study did not attempt to determine true functional English levels, or the success in their academic program of these students, both of which are important factors in making final evaluations. Future research is needed into both these factors, but it does appear that a tightening of English standards for admission is quite definitely required in universities' policies, as this has already been identified as a broader problem, albeit one that has been disregarded, given the temptation of international students' fees (see Owens 2005). Unfortunately such dishonesty by government

bureaucrats and university administrators has the potential to ultimately devalue both the Australian higher education experience and market, which are substantially built on promises of quality (see Nelson 2003).

Implications of study findings for the current marketisation model

The framework under which the higher education industry operates has been rightly described as a marketisation model (Marginson 1997, 1999; Marginson & Considine 2000). This model, developed and espoused by government bureaucrats and university administrators, has as its chief purposes profit and the maintenance of the flow of full fee paying students into Australian universities. Official government documents reflect this model (eg see House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance & Public Administration 2007; Nelson 2003) and, although these give lip-service to the need for maintenance of quality services, effective teaching and support for international students through the ESOS Act of 2000, there is little evidence of specific and substantial investment to meet the special needs of international students.

More recent research has indicated that the marketisation model is under challenge, with serious concerns about the quality of degree programs and the English language skills with which international students graduate (see Birrell 2006; Birrell & Healy 2008). Despite the actual overall increase in the numbers of international students coming to Australia, there has been a decline in the number of Japanese students enrolling at Australian universities since 2006. This needs to be seen in the context of intense international competition from the UK and USA for provision of tertiary education services, and the fact that Japanese students comprise one of the largest possible markets. While the increasing value of the Australian dollar over this period has possibly contributed to this result, it has not affected the increase in number of students of other nationalities as markedly, and it may be that the Japanese are simply a more discerning client group whose needs are not being met. Word of mouth is an important element in program promotion and the maintenance of a higher education industry, one of whose chief selling points is quality.

The needs of international students moving to study in the different Australian university culture has been well recognized for the last two decades (eg Ballard, 1987; Burke 1988; Phillips 1993; Cobbin et al 1999; Owens 2005), with very little evidence of practical outcomes to meet international students' special needs, over and above the services provided to all students, and focused upon chiefly the needs of Australian born ones (see Cobbin et al 1999; Owens 2005). What this research has certainly revealed is that the vision of study based on tourism revealed in *Servicing Our Future* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance & Public Administration 2007) is naïve in that it does not recognize that study at university

involves much more than travel tourism, and that the only way this promotional approach can be credible is to supply specialist support mechanisms for the different cultural groups (see Fallon 2008) as part of university policies and services. Generally it is clear there needs to be a fundamental change away from the marketisation model to one more supportive of international student needs, if the highly profitable Australian higher education industry is to continue with increased competition from the UK and USA, which will no doubt increase further with the economic recession currently being experienced in these countries.

How important is it that Japanese students chose to study in Australia for liberal education reasons?

While it was surprising to find that Australia had been chosen by sixty six per cent of respondents as the study destination for cultural interest reasons and liking for Australia, rather than educational ones, this perhaps is relatively unimportant, although it does contrast strongly with the utilitarian views of university that have come to predominate in Australia. As has been pointed out in Chapter 5, in the USA too, a country whose values have much influenced Japanese institutions, undergraduate degrees are often seen as a broad general education experience. In the USA also they are not used to make judgments concerning desirable, occupationally specific knowledge in recruitment for employment with larger employers (see Hunamaker & Riley 2006).

Given the Japanese value of *gambaru* (doing one's best), once enrolled in Australian universities, Japanese students exhibit high levels of motivation, not least because of the high financial commitment. It would seem appropriate that universities, if they wish to encourage the higher education industry with Japanese students, need to provide the services to assist the students to meet the universities' academic requirements and, symbiotically, the students' personal goals on their voyage of discovery through an international sojourn.

Implications for methods in future research

This exploratory study was conducted without the benefit a substantial body of relevant research to provide guidance in the way of methods likely to prove most suitable, or indications of possible findings. The questionnaire and semi-structured interview methods appear to be useful approaches that would help build in reliability and validity checks in similar research. The English as second language problem will always be a reality, but this study has demonstrated that substantial results can be achieved in using English in the data collection instruments and methods, provided there is cultural sensitivity.

Although beyond the scope of this research, it is probable that the specialist skill sessions advised for Japanese international students may also help Australian born students, who also do not always understand what is expected of them and required for success at university (see Cooper 2003; Morley-Warner 2000). Parallel approaches, underpinned by relevant needs analysis research involving students themselves, have the potential also to assist other cultural groups where there is recognition that the home cultural values in learning and study are distinctly different to Australian academic cultural values. Fallon's (2008) analyses of the socio-cultural values in different cultures, and the identification of the specific problems in Australian academic culture stemming from these socio-cultural values, reveal the importance of in-depth cultural understanding and offer guidance for future research. The needs analysis approach involving the international students themselves, although largely ignored, but adopted in this research, has been demonstrated by the findings in this study as being very important.

Specific recommendations

The Japanese cultural values and social mores outlined in Chapter 2, which have deeply informed the questions asked in this research and the interpretation of findings, can serve as important sources of information for those seeking better to understand Japanese students studying in Australia, regardless of level of education. Of the following specific recommendations, a number draw upon understanding of these values and mores to suggest particular practices that display sensitivity to Japanese expectations. These are thus likely to be effective in helping universities develop constructive policies to surmount some of the learning and cultural differences and difficulties that have been identified in this research.

Recommendation 1: Further research

This is recognized as an exploratory study in the absence of other substantial research into the learning needs and expectations of Japanese students at Australian universities. Furthermore the limitations of this research are acknowledged in Chapter 5. There is a serious need for more extensive research covering a variety of issues. There needs to be longitudinal research that looks at the academic outcomes as well as measures the experiences of Japanese students as they progress through their programs. The SBS (2008) program revealed that some Japanese students do certainly fail in their first year. This research deliberately selected the first six months of study, as it was considered that would be the most difficult in terms of cultural adjustment, and it was expected that it would be possible to identify many of the major problems from this period. This however meant that data, concerning the outcomes of study along with longer term problems, could not be obtained. Longitudinal research could potentially reveal whether

difficulties and challenges lessened as skills are acquired, the degree to which skills are acquired and insights into how to manage skill acquisition, as well as degree of satisfaction on completion and need for mental health support through the program.

This research was not able to explore what it was that students read in trying to prepare for their Australian learning adventure. Determining what is read, its accessibility and best means of dissemination in Japan are all important issues in preparation for study in Australia. What is also required is research into the funding/support systems for Japanese international students and the factors that are involved in decision-making, along with who carries the most influence in this process. International study appears to be possibly a rite of passage for Japanese students. More research is required into this intercultural sojourn in order to understand it more. It is also important to better understand the motivation of the postgraduate students, who also appear to have enrolled for liberal education and personal challenge reasons. Additionally, knowledge about all of these factors is important for the effective promotion and marketing of programs.

The needs analysis approach adopted in this research involving the students themselves needs to be replicated with other cultural groups where attitudes/approaches to learning in the home culture are significantly different to the Australian academic one. Only through this will it be possible to delineate the specific needs of the different cultural groups, whose learning expectations have been shaped by at least schooling, and possibly university study, in their home cultures. As Fallon (2008) has pointed out, such knowledge is important when dealing on a one-to-one basis with students experiencing difficulties related to culturally-based expectations, with much effective rectification of individual misunderstandings occurring in the one-to-one situation.

Recommendation 2: More stringent English language standards and English language support

There is serious need to review English entry level standards to Australian universities for international students (see Birell 2006; Birrell and Healy 2008). Many of the learning and study problems encountered by the Japanese students in this study were deeply entwined with inadequate functional levels of academic English. Although all international students, like the Japanese students in this research, will have met the required language level to enter the institution, this in effect means only that the students have sufficient language ability to pass the relevant language assessment. Whereas realistically, to some degree, this may demonstrate preparedness for visiting Australia, it may not necessarily demonstrate preparedness for

successful study at an Australian university. Importantly also, it may not demonstrate a level of competence to successfully use the English language in the academic context.

Even with more stringent entry standards there will continue to be problems with academic English for those who speak English as a second language, particularly in light of the trend towards more postgraduate enrollments. Many Australian universities typically have a language centre attached to the institution. For students who are struggling with in their English, referral to such a centre for additional classes might be an appropriate option. However this may be viewed negatively by a student referred to such an organization who, after all, had been accepted by the institution as having met their stated required English language level. This may particularly be the case when the language school is owned and managed by the university's corporate division and thus tuition there typically attracts a fee. Support through an institutional Learning Centre or similar is typically more appropriate, since as discussed for Japanese students, saving face is paramount and thus for students who do require linguistic support, the institution's Learning Centre which covers more than simply English language support is often a better and less public option.

Recommendation 3: Institutional attitude(s): Ensuring that students understand institutional and course requirements and expectations

There is a need for universities to establish both policies and programs to ensure that Japanese students are made familiar with the institutional and course requirements and expectations. Programs conducted before enrollments are needed to ensure that Japanese students understand the very different cultural expectations operating in the Australian academic culture. These programs also need to provide training in the specific, basic academic skills that have been identified as problematic because of the different learning and cultural expectations in the two cultures. Those skills outlined in summary Tables 26 (a-c) potentially can form a basis for these training programs.

As referred to throughout this research, saving 'face' is paramount in Japan. Institutions accepting Japanese students need to make their Japanese students feel 'wanted' and part of the group, in this instance the institution, thus creating an environment where 'face' is less likely to be lost. Linked in with this is the need for the students to feel secure in an educational environment that is so very different to the Japanese tertiary sector where, as discussed in Chapter 5, students do not typically study to the degree that Australian students do, but nor do Japanese students fail. Receiving institutions need to ensure that Japanese students are aware of this significant difference in a supportive, non-threatening way, since, significant failures will, in

the eyes of Japanese students, be the responsibility or fault of the institution not of the student(s) involved. Whereas this may not be a typical discussion point in an orientation program, Japanese students need to have a very clear understanding of the institution's expectations of them. It is simply too late once a fail has been accrued.

One potential way of helping address these requirements is to invite Japanese graduates, who had attained Permanent Residency in Australia, and senior Japanese students to assist with the development of a discreet orientation for incoming Japanese students. Such a program would provide a further environment where the incoming students could meet potential *sempai*.

Recommendation 4: Promotional Material: Content and language

If Japanese students are to be better prepared for tertiary studies in Australia, they need to have a clearer understanding of the significant differences between universities in Japan and Australia, prior to considering enrollment. This could be done through promotional materials. While the provision of this information is important, it is also important to create a balance, one that does not place the students in a situation where study in Australia is viewed as being too difficult, unachievable or not a pleasurable social experience.

The role of promotional material must not be simply to talk about the institution, the location and the programs offered, but must also cover the similarities and differences, both pedagogical and socio-cultural that differentiate studies in Australia and Japan. Through consideration of such issues students are better able to make informed decisions regarding their tertiary studies in Australia. Through such materials they can also be informed of the existence of prerequisite support programs prior to enrollment. However it is important to recognize that there are many students who, at the time of planning or decision making, may have insufficient English language ability to understand such text, thus a CD Rom explaining these important points in both English and Japanese should be made available to all enquiring Japanese students.

Recommendation 5: Socio-cultural expectations - the kohai/sempai relationship

Japanese students are traditionally accustomed to being part of a group in many activities in their lives, both in and out of the educational scenario. One such socio-cultural norm is having an older person or senior student (*sempai*) assist and guide a younger person (*kohai*). This socio-cultural expectation is still important in Japan, as evidenced in comments made by students participating in this research regarding the difficulty of finding a helpful senior student.

When Japanese students approach an institution with enquiries regarding academic study, irrespective of whether or not the students is in Australia or Japan, they could be provided with

the opportunity to contact an existing senior level student who has been educated at the institution. This should not be a 'marketing' activity but a genuine forum for potential students to discuss similarities and differences between the two educational systems. Through such a system, potential students would have the opportunity to better acquaint themselves with the educational system and institution that they are considering entering, and, depending upon the status of the senior student, may also commence the development of a support network. The senior students themselves could furthermore train the next cohort of students to continue the provision of such a service.

In addition to providing such pre-enrolment support, Japanese students could also be provided with facilities to emulate the group processes through regular meetings. This does occur in some Australian universities and is an important vehicle for the creation of a sense of security provided by the group. It also provides opportunities for incoming students to source senior students for educational and socio-cultural support, thus enabling issues of either nature to be discussed in a secure environment.

Recommendation 6: Buddy programs

A number of students participating in this research referred to senior students and the difficulty finding them. When students in this research were asked in the semi-structured interview what Australian universities could do to assist Japanese students, a number suggested that a Buddy Program be put in place. Where the institution teaches Japanese language and culture, both the incoming Japanese students, and the Australian students studying Japanese, would benefit from such a program. In addition to academic support however, a program of this nature would provide socio-cultural support and an entrée for the Japanese students into the lives of their Australian buddies, this providing a wider socio-cultural understanding and potentially academic peer support. Buddies could be provided with a certificate of appreciation from the institution acknowledging the role that they have played in the program.

Recommendation 7: Dealing with the study load

It appears from this research that an important issue is the un-preparedness of the students for the academic work load. As commented upon by the students themselves, the work load was substantially greater than would have been the case had the students studied in Japan. This can create a difficult situation for institutions that do not want students to be frightened away by the perceived workload, but conversely are ethically and legally bound to ensure that the information provided is accurate. The typical learning pattern of Japanese students is rote learning, thus the un-preparedness referred to above relates not just to the work load itself, but to the way in which

an Australian university expects its students to study. Japanese students need to receive guidance in a wide range of study skills since, not only are the expectations and requirements of the two systems so very different, the academic expectations particularly at the undergraduate level in Australia are significantly more rigorous than in Japan, where undergraduate studies students generally do not appear to expect to study with the seriousness expected in Australia. Other issues relate to the academic skills, such as how to plan and write an assignment, which occurs in a very different format to that in Australia.

The idea of studying in a *yobiko* (refer Chapter 5) to achieve the skills or test taking ability to assist entry into a famous university is well accepted in Japan. Australian universities could therefore consider extended short courses in relation to the use of academic English in the classroom for a minimal fee to assist Japanese and other students better understand the institutions expectations regarding their role in the teaching and learning area. Such programs could be offered by the institution's Learning Centre with the assistance of senior Japanese students who have themselves experienced the differences and would be in a better position to suggest models that might assist.

Recommendation 8: Dealing with the 'other'

When compared to Australian students, Japanese students may appear reserved and withdrawn. This stumbling block to integration typically relates not to understanding, but more to where to place both self and the 'other' in what, to the Japanese students, is an unknown environment. Accepting institutions need to be aware that 'face' will be lost in the eyes of the student (and potentially other Japanese and Asian students) should the student 'say the wrong thing' or respond in an inappropriate manner. Institutions therefore need to develop ways in which 'messages' can be transmitted to Japanese students in a 'safe', non threatening environment. It might well be that such an environment is in fact a 'Japanese notice board' where hints and advice, written in Japanese can be posted through, for example, a 'hint of the day' scenario. Such hints may relate to social niceties, such as phrases to employ when wishing to remove oneself from an uncomfortable environment, as well as well as how to start or enter a conversation. Phrases with an academic focus are also important, and thus the academic hint of the day may relate to addressing academic staff, for example how to request assistance, and an explanation of some of the internal protocols.

Since such a notice board may also attract Australian students majoring in Japanese, particularly if the messages or hints are written in Japanese, there is also the potential for a range of positive

intercultural outcomes. The notice board could be in a location where seating is available, thus providing an environment where interaction can occur.

Concluding statement

There would certainly appear to be challenges in maintaining sufficient numbers of full fee paying students in Australia, given increasing competition from other countries. The provision of good services is likely to produce enhanced cultural understanding, as well as effective academic learning, so that mutual benefits for students, universities and the Australian economy result.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. This questionnaire seeks your opinions on your previous educational experiences and your expectations of your proposed Australian educational experience. Your responses will help educators in Australian universities better understand the needs of Japanese students.

Instructions: There are three main types of questions on this questionnaire; some questions have a number of parts to them.

Type One:

This asks you a question with a yes or no answer. For 'yes', please circle the Y, for 'no' please circle the N.

Type Two

This asks you a question where you are asked to respond something. Please tick ✓ the response which is closest to your situation or feelings. Sometimes you may be asked to tick more than one item. Other times you may be asked to number them in order of importance. Sometimes, where indicated, it is quite all right to tick more than one item.

Type Three

These questions ask you to explain why you think or feel a certain way about something.

The questions are divided into a number of sections:

Section 1: About you

Section 2: You in Australia

Section 3: You in Japan

Please remember, there is no right or wrong answer to these questions as this is not a test.

Shall we begin?

SECTION ONE- About You

1a) Please tick the statement that is the closest to you

I am the eldest child in my family

I am an only child

I am the youngest child in my family

I am the middle child in my family

1b) Have any of your family already studied overseas? Y N

1c) If Yes: Who was it and where did they study?.....

1d) What level of program are you enrolling in?

Bachelor's Degree.....

Post graduate Certificate.....

Post graduate Diploma.....

Master's Degree.....

Doctorate.....

1e) What is your area of study?

2a) Did you complete high school in Japan? Y N

2b) If No: Did you complete your High School/University studies in:

Australia Y N

Somewhere else Y N If yes, where?.....

2c) Did you complete a Foundation Studies program in Australia? Y N

2d) If yes, where.....

3a) How well do you think your high school / university experiences have prepared you for university in Australia, please tick one.

Very well

Quite well

A little

Not at all

4a) Where did you study English in preparation for this program?

Japan.....

Australia.....

Somewhere else? Which country / countries

4b) If you studied English in Australia, where did you study?

In a private language school.....

In the language school belonging to this university.....

At a language school belonging to another university.....

At a TAFE language school.....

4c) How long did you spend studying English for your University program?

.....

5a) Have you been onto a University Campus in Japan? Y N

5b) Did you listen to a lecture? Y N

6a) Before you came here, did you expect your Australian university campus to be, please pick one:

Just the same as a campus in Japan.....

Similar to a campus in Japan.....

Nothing like a campus in Japan.....

Look the same but feel different.....

Look different but feel the same.....

6b) Can you explain why you answered in that way?.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION TWO – You in Australia

7a) Before enrolling at this university, had you ever been onto a university campus in Australia?

Y N

7b) Did you sit in on a lecture? Y N

7c) If yes, did you try to listen to the lecture? Y N?

7d) Which of the following statements most accurately reflect the way you felt about the lecture?

You can tick more than one.

It was just what I had expected, very difficult to understand because it was in specialized English
.....

It was similar to what I had expected, but I could understand some of it which made me feel
happy

It was really easy for me to follow so I was not worried

It was nothing like I had expected, many people were listening carefully and taking notes, it
made me feel concerned.....

I could not understand anything

7e) If you visited the campus but did not go to a lecture why did you go
there?.....

.....

8a) Have you spoken to other Japanese students who have been to, or are at university in
Australia? Y N

8b) What did they tell you about their experiences here?.....

.....

.....

.....
8c) Did what they told you:

Scare you Y N

Not worry you at all Y N

Reassure you that it would not be a problem Y N

8d) Did you talk to them:

In Japan Y N

In Australia Y N

9a) Whose idea was it that you study overseas?

Yours.....

A family memberWho?.....

A teacher's

An older friend who had studied overseas.....

9b) How long before you came to Australia did you decide to study here?

.....

9c) How old were you when you decided to study in Australia?.....

10a) When thinking about the sort of feelings that you and your family had about your coming to this country, which of the following were important to you, and to your parent/s. 10b Please number from 1-5 for both you and your parent/s

Please number from 1-5

1 Very important

2 Quite important

3 Reasonably important

4 Not very important

5 Not important at all

For you For your parent/s

Concern about the quality of education.....

Concern about my ability to look after myself.....

Loneliness for me without my family.....

Loneliness for my family without me.....

Who would look after my parents.....

Excitement about living overseas.....

Is my English language good enough.....

Can I live without my circle of friends.....

Will I make friends easily.....

Who can I depend upon if I have a problem.....

Will I 'stay Japanese'

Have I chosen the right university.....

11a) Have you been to Australia before? Y / N

11b) If you answered yes, **when** and **why** did you previously come here?

.....
.....

11c) Why was Australia chosen as a study destination?.....

.....
.....
.....

12a) How much reading did you do about university life in Australia before you came here?

A lot

Quite a lot

A reasonable amount

Not much

None at all

13a) Did your reading help you prepare for university study here? Y N

13b) Can you explain why/ why not?

.....
.....

SECTION THREE – You in Japan

14a) Thinking about how hard you studied before you came to Australia, did you see yourself as:

A very good student

A good student

An average student

A below average student

A poor student

14b) When choosing the category to place yourself in, which of the following were important to you, please number from 1-5

1 Very important

2 Quite important

3 Reasonably important

4 Not very important

5 Not important at all

I always studied very hard in class.....

I went to a cram school after school to help me get better marks.....

I asked for help from more senior students when I needed it.....

I tried to please my parents all the time in my studies.....

I always had good marks in my tests.....

I tried to balance my studies and social life.....

I always did my best.....

I recognized that I was good at some things, but not at others.....

I was able to help younger students both educationally and socially...

14c) Do you expect to be in the same category in Australia? Y N

14d) Why / why not?.....

.....

.....

14e) When in high school, did you get help or support from:

Your parents Y N

Other classmates Y N

Your teacher/s Y N

An older student Y N

Someone else? Who?.....

14f) How did this person / these people help
you?.....

.....

.....

15a) Did you go to a cram school (*Juku*) in Japan? Y N

15b) If your answer is yes, do you think that this helped you prepare for coming to Australia Y N

15c) If your answer is yes, can you explain how it helped you?

.....
.....
.....
.....

15d) If it did not help you, can you explain why not?.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

15e) If you did not to a cram school, do you think your studies here will benefit or suffer as a result?

They will benefit Y

They will suffer Y

15f) Depending upon how you answered 15e, can you explain why you think this will be the case?

.....
.....
.....

16a) In Japan, who did you spend most of your time with when not in school / university? (you can tick as many as you like here)

Yourself.....

A friend the same age as you.....

A friend older than you.....

Classmates from school / university.....

Members of your family.....

Members of the same club at school / university.....

A teacher, or some other person you look up to.....

Someone else..... Who?.....

16b) In Australia, who do you spend most of your time with when not in school / university? (you can tick as many as you like here)

Yourself.....

A friend the same age as you.....

A friend older than you.....

Classmates from school / university.....

Members of your family.....

Members of the same club at school / university.....

A teacher, or some other person you look up to.....

Australian students.....

The person / people who I live with.....

I don't know.....

17a) Would you describe yourself as being:

A confident person, not afraid to say what they think Y N

A shy person, who does not feel comfortable when asked to say what they think in public Y N

A quiet person, who prefers to listen, but not necessarily participate in discussion Y N

An outgoing person, who likes to lead the discussion Y N

17b) Thinking about the way you answered **17a)**, do you think that your view of yourself will affect your learning in Australia?

.....
.....
.....
.....

17c) How / Why do you think that this might be the case?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

18a) How easy or difficult do you expect the following areas of study to be:

Please number from 1 to 5

- 1 Very difficult
- 2 Quite difficult
- 3 Not particularly difficult
- 4 Quite easy
- 5 Very easy

Listening and Understanding in lectures.....

Note taking in lectures.....

Reading for assignments.....

Writing assignments.....

Asking questions in tutorials.....

Discussing your studies with Australian students.....
Talking to your lecturers.....
Finding the information you need in the library.....
Using the internet.....
Group work.....
Understanding your assignments.....
Understanding what your lecturers mean.....
Developing a relationship with other students.....
Developing a relationship with your lecturers.....
Explaining in English what you know in Japanese.....

19a) Do you expect your lecturers to

Spend as much time with you as you need when you have a problem with your studies Y N

Direct you to someone who can help you when you have a problem with your studies Y N

Spend little time with you when you have a problem with your studies Y N

Be sympathetic to you since English is not your first language Y N

Arrange social gatherings for you and other students Y N

Advise you on personal matters Y N

Be interested in you as a person Y N

Be interested in Japan Y N

19b) If your expectations of your lecturers **are not** met, do you think that this might affect:

Your confidence Y N

Your study Y N

Your feelings about Australia Y N

19c) If your expectations of your lecturers **are** met, how do you think that this might affect you?

.....
.....
.....

20a) Do you expect non Japanese students on campus to initiate a conversation with you Y N

20b) Do you expect to initiate a conversation with non Japanese students on campus Y N

20c) In what ways do you think that Australian people are different to Japanese people

.....
.....
.....
.....

21a) In Japan, how do you normally spend your free time?

.....
.....
.....
.....

21b) How do you plan to spend your free time in Australia?

.....
.....
.....
.....

22a) Can you list three differences between study in Japan and Australia that you think will be the easiest and the most difficult and explain why?

22b)

Difficult

1.....
.....
.....
.....

2.....
.....
.....
.....

3.....
.....
.....

22c)

Easy

1.....
.....
.....
.....

2.....
.....
.....
.....

3.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you think that these six points might affect your learning here in Australia, in what ways?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

23a) How do you plan to deal with the difficulties you encounter in your ‘study life’ here, and also in living in Australia?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

24a) What do you think will be the most exciting aspect of your studies in Australia

.....
.....
.....

25a) At the end of your course, who will be the happiest and proudest person or people in Japan?

.....
.....
.....

25b) How will you feel?

.....
.....
.....

25c) If your program takes you longer than you expected, how will that be viewed by:

You.....
Your Parents.....
Other friends.....

25d) If you are not successful, who will be the saddest or most disappointed person or people in Japan?.....

.....

25e) How will you feel?.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY.

I HOPE YOU ENJOY BEING A STUDENT IN AUSTRALIA

GOOD LUCK AND GANBATTE!

Appendix B Semi-structured interview

Questions Asked

Not all questions were asked of all students, and not all questions were relevant to all students.

Responses to questions guided the interview.

Section One

Group 1

- a) Many students' expectations of the Australian campus were that 'it would be nothing like in Japan.
- b) What did you expect?
- c) Physical aspect: Buildings.
- d) Academic: Attitude of students to study.
- e) Attitude of academic staff to students.

- f) Were these attitudes what you had expected?
- g) Yes
- h) No
- i) Was there any impact upon your learning as a result of this and if so what?

Group 2

- a) Had you talked to other Japanese students who had or were studying at University in Australia?
- b) Yes
- c) Was the information received from them accurate in your case?
- d) No

- e) Would it have helped you if it had been?
- f) Yes
- g) No
- h) Why
- i) Did this help or hinder your learning and how.

Group 3

- a) In the questions relating ranking the importance to student and parents, Is my English good enough was 'very important' to 40% of students, but to 40% of parents it was 'not very important'. Why do you think that this was the case?
- b) in the same question group, who to rely upon when I have a problem was 'very important' to 12% of students, and 'not important at all' to 19%, but to 30% of parents it was 'very important' and not important at all to 4%.

Why do you think that people thought in this way?

Group 4

When asked how they saw themselves as a student, the majority of people said 'Average'.

- a) Do you think that this is true and does it reflect the 'typical' Japanese student in Australia?

Group 5

When asked how important it had been to them in Japan to balance study and social life, the majority of people said extremely important.

- a) Do you expect to be able to do this in Australia?

No (Reasons)

Yes (Reasons)

- b) Why/How has this been the case?

Section Two

Group 1

When asked how important it was to them in Japan to always do their best, the majority of people said 'extremely important'.

a) Do you expect to be able to do this in Australia?

No (Reasons)

Yes (Reasons)

b) has this been the case?

Section Three

Group 1

Many people thought that they would not be the same in Australia as in Japan because of 'difference'.

a) Other than the fact that the language of instruction here is English, what do you think that this expectation was?

Group Five Many people received a lot of help from classmates in High School in Japan.

a) Did you expect to receive the same support from classmates here at your University on Australia?

b) Yes - Did/do you receive that support?

c) If not why not?

d) No -Why did you not expect it?

Section Four

- a) What sort of support and assistance did you expect to receive from academic staff in Australia?
- b) Did you receive that support?
- c) Yes
- d) No – Why do you think that this is the case?

Section Five

Some students thought that going to Juku helped them get to Australia either by helping them get to a better university in Japan, or by assisting with their English Language skills.

- a) Do you agree?
- b) Yes / No
- c) Why/not

Section Six

- a) Who do you spend most of your time with here?
- b) is this what you had expected?

Section Seven

- a) When asked to describe self, most people said that they were shy, did not like to lead discussion, and preferred to listen. Do you think that that this type of personality or characteristic helps or hinders in the study process here in Australia?
- b) The majority of people felt that this characteristic would affect their learning, how do you think that Japanese students could be encouraged to participate more in discussion?

Section Eight

- a) What were your expectations regarding the roll of academic staff outside of formal academic settings e.g. lectures or tutorials?
- b) Were those expectations met?

c) Why do you think that this is the case?

Section Nine

a) What would you say was the most difficult aspect of study for Japanese students in Australia and what could Australian Universities do to help the students?

Section Ten

a) Did you think that you would be told what to study and how to study by your lecturers?

b) No

c) Yes

d) Can you explain why this was your expectation?

e) Why do you think that this expectation was /not met?

Section Eleven

Talking to lecturers was the area of study difficulty that seemed to cause the most problems.

a) Can you explain why you think that this is the case and how this difficulty affects the learning process?

Section Twelve

Many students talked about Australian students as being relaxed, casual, not studying hard, studying very hard, being outgoing, friendly, independent, outspoken and lively.

a) How do you think your family would respond if you were to take on some of these 'Aussie' attributes?

Section Thirteen

a) Have you been able to have free time whilst here?

b) No

c) Yes

d) How have you spent that time?

Section Fourteen

Many students thought that despite the difficulties, study was easier here in Australia than in Japan.

- a) Do you agree?
- b) Why/not

Section Fifteen

- a) Have you developed strategies to deal with the difficulties?
- b) Have they worked?
- c) Yes
- d) No
- e) Why not

Section Sixteen

- a) What role did your parents play in your coming to Australia and how do they view the experience that you are undertaking here.
- b) Many people said that their parents would be the happiest upon your graduation, but also said that parents or friends would not care if you did not finish on time and had to study here longer. Can you explain this?

Section Seventeen

- a) Do you think that you will be the same person returning to Japan?
- b) Yes
- c) No
- d) In what ways do you think that you will have changed?
- e) How will your family view this?

Section Eighteen

a) What aspect of Japan and Japanese culture do you miss the most here in Australia?

Section Nineteen

a) What piece of advice would you give a Japanese student thinking of studying in this country?

Appendix C: Additional results from the questionnaire

Where students had developed their English language skills through educational experiences not listed in Tables 4(a) 4(b) 4(c) or 4(d).

Table 4(f): Other ways in which the students maintained they had developed their English Language

Pathway	Number	Percentage
Local high school	2	14.2
Time spent in Australia	2	14.2
English Language training not just for tertiary studies in Australia	2	14.2
Through other courses	2	14.2
Through a TAFE diploma or Tourism program	2	14.2
Educated in English	1	7.1
Six years of Japanese high school system	1	7.1
Worked as a translator	1	7.1
Many years	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Two students (14.2%) maintained that they had studied English through the local [Australian] high school, 2 others (14.2% through other courses (not identified); 2 more (14.2%) through a TAFE diploma or Tourism program, 2 others (14.2%) through time spent in Australia, with two other respondents (14.2%) students commenting that their English Language training had not been just for tertiary studies in Australia. One student (7.1%) indicated that they had studied English through 6 years in the Japanese high school system, 1 student had worked as a translator, 1 further student (7.1%) had been educated in English, with a further student (7.1%) commenting 'many years'.

The numbers are small in each category and although inconclusive, do indicate the range of environments where language learning can occur.

Question 14(e): Examples of where support was found in high school.

Table 14(g): Who the 'someone else' had been

Source of support	Number	Percentage
Older brother	2	22.2
Cram school teacher	3	33.3
Sister	1	11.1
Native English speaker	1	11.1
Uncle	1	11.1
Text books	1	11.1
Total	9	100.0

Classmates

Tables 14 (k) (l) and (m) aimed to explore the support classmates provided for each other.

Table 14(k): The form of support provided by classmates

Type of support	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Educational support	23	69.6
Emotional / Motivational support or advice	8	24.2
No Response	2	6.0
Total	33	100.0

Results in Table 14(k) demonstrate that some 23 respondents (69.6%) had received educational support from their classmates. Eight students (24.2%) had received emotional or motivational support, or advice. This mutual support is to be expected since all are focused upon the same goal, that of entering a prestigious university. Refer Table 14(l) (below) for further details.

Table 14(l) Examples of the educational support provided by classmates

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Academic support	13	56.5
Study groups	4	17.3
Borrowed from or had notes provided by classmates	1	4.3
Talked about homework	1	4.3
Provided information (1)	1	4.3
Advice	1	4.3
Provided better ways to study	1	4.3
No Response	1	4.3
Total	23	100.00

(1) Unspecified.

Table 14 (k) demonstrated that some 23 students (69.6%) had received educational support from classmates. Table 14 (l) indicates the form of support provided. Over half of the respondents, some 13 students (56.6%), indicated that classmates had provided academic support although the form or content of this support is unknown. It does however further demonstrate the ‘group’ supporting each other.

Table 14(m) (below) provides further information regarding the forms of emotional support provided by classmates.

Table 14(m): Examples of the emotional / motivational support or advice provided by classmates

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Motivation to Study	5	50.0
Encouragement	1	10.0

Can understand each other	1	10.0
Social support	3	30.0
Total	10	100.0

The form of emotional support provided by classmates is unclear, however in the Japanese group scenario, 'Motivation to study' and 'Encouragement' typically refer to '*gambaru*' encouraging both self and other members of the group situation classmates, to do one's best.

Table 14(j): Examples of the emotional / motivational support provided by teachers

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Motivation to study	1	33.3
Social support	2	66.6
Total	3	100.0

Table 14(j) provides information regarding the emotional and motivational support provided by teachers.

This may be as important as academic support when viewed in light of the pressure in high school that students find themselves under in terms of entrance examination preparation for their university of choice. The responses however were too few to provide any meaningful pattern.

Tables 14(n), 14(o) and 14(p) (below) provide information regarding parental support.

Table 14(n): The form of support provided by parents

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Financial support	6	27.2
Educational support (1)	11	50.0
Emotional / Motivational support or	5	22.7

advice		
Total (2)	22	100.0

(1) Unspecified

(2) Since students provided multiple responses, the figure of 22 pertains to responses not respondents,

The educational support provided by the students' parents is important due to achievements in the individual's education reflecting upon the family. Refer Chapter 2.

Table 14(o): Examples of the emotional / motivational support or advice provided by parents

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Motivation to Study	2	22.2
Gave advice when asked (1)	3	33.3
Cheering me up	1	11.1
Emotional support	2	22.2
Encouraged not to rush life	1	11.1
Total	9	100.0

(1) Unspecified

Table 14(p): Examples of the educational support provided by parents

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Provided information / help (1)	5	50.0
No Response	5	50.0
Total	10	100.0

(1) Unspecified

Japan's changing society has made the procurement of a position in a prestigious company even more important – the students' parents therefore play an important role in their child's endeavour to enter a high-status university, be it by providing academic, emotional or moral support.

Table 14(q) provides examples of the support provided by a *juku*.

Table 14(q): Examples of the educational support or advice provided by a *juku*

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
To pass university entrance exam	1	12.5
Teaching effective	2	25.0
Encouraged good / better marks	2	25.0
Encouraged interest in study	2	25.0
Provided extra studies	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

The sole purpose of the *juku* is to prepare the students to pass the entrance examination to their university of preference. Refer to Chapter 2 for further details.

Table 14(r) provides information regarding the support or advice provided by siblings.

Table 14(r): Examples of the educational support or advice provided by siblings

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Academic support(1)	4	100.0
Total	4	100.0

(1) Type unspecified

It is reasonable to expect that the siblings providing the support are older siblings who, having already passed through the '*shikenjigoku*' (examination hell) (Refer Chapter 2), and can provide strategies for both study and ensuring that their younger siblings *gambaru*.

Table 14(s): Examples of the social / emotional support provided by friends

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Cheering me up	1	33.3
Shared joy / difficulty	1	33.3
Emotional support to get through high school	1	33.
Total	3	100.0

Where friends, are all experiencing the same issues, it is to be expected that the group supports each other. The position of the students in the family may have some bearing upon the results of Table 14(s), i.e. members of the group, as commented upon earlier, supporting each other. This is of particular importance if the individual is an only child.

Table 14(ta): Examples of the educational support provided by older students

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Academic support*	1	50.0
Information provided*	1	50.0
Total	2	100.0

*Unspecified

As was suggested regarding the support provided by siblings in Table 14(q) it is not unreasonable to expect that *sempai* - older students who have already experienced the process that the students are undertaking, can provide emotional and motivational support for their *kohai* - younger students. That only two students cited educational support being provided by older students suggests that either it is not as common as has been the case in the past or that students are saving face, possibly to themselves, through not acknowledging such support.

Table 14(tb): Examples of the support provided by a native speaker of English

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Educational help*	1	50.0
English language	1	50.0
Total	2	100.0

*Unspecified

Personal experience had demonstrated that English language training in Japanese high schools teaches ‘about English’ rather than how to use the language. It might be therefore that the native speaker taught in a more communicative way, this may not however have assisted the student pass the entrance examination.

Table 14(u): Examples of the educational support provided by a relative

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
Educational support(1)	1	50.0
Educational help(2)	1	50.0
Total	2	100.0

(1) Unspecified (2) Unspecified

The results in Table 14(u): Examples of the Educational support provided by a relative are small and reveal no definite pattern.

Refer to Chapter 4 for further discussion on the theme of support.

The reasons that students who had attended a *juku* felt that it had helped them prepare to study in Australia

Table 15(c): Reasons attending a *juku* had helped

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
1) I got my English skills at <i>juku</i> , some <i>juku</i>	3	30.0

are very good, and they help students think independently.		
2) Better that nothing, so it could be helped but, the pronunciation of English wasn't learned.	1	10.0
3) I went to a clam (1) school for to study English. English study at school was helpless in my case.	1	10.0
4) I studied grammar, Japanese and world history. I can talk about it with other countries' students	1	10.0
5) It gave me a chance to come to Australia	1	10.0
6) It made me read a lot of English and got the habit to keeping reading more, for example, newspapers and magazines	1	10.0
7) I studied English hard in <i>juku</i>	1	10.0
8)I got good marks of IELTS(2)	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

1)L1 interference – clam = cram

2) English Language assessment test required for university entry in Australia; refer to Chapter 3, Methods and Procedures, for further information.

Table 14(q): Examples of the educational support or advice provided by a *juku*

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
To pass university entrance exam	1	12.5
Teaching effective	2	25.0
Encouraged good / better marks	2	25.0
Encouraged interest in study	2	25.0
Provided extra studies	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

The sole purpose of the *juku* is to prepare the students to pass the entrance examination to their university of preference. Refer to Chapter 2 for further details. The numbers are somewhat smaller than expected, and may demonstrate socio-cultural changes.

Table 15(d) Reasons that students who had attended *juku* felt that it had indirectly resulted in their studying in Australia.

Examples	Number of respondents citing	Percentage
1) Unless I went to the Japanese University I would not know about or think about study abroad. Cram school is only a preparing institution for entering any uni.	1	33.3
2) Cram school has a benefit	1	33.3

in one way. They give you a better opportunity to get into a ‘better school’ (junior high or not) which means you are likely to receive better education (qualifications etc).		
3)If I didn’t go to a cram, I don’t go to Australia.	1	33.3
Total	3	100.0

As demonstrated by comments in Table 15(d) attending a *juku*, is an important aspect of climbing the socio-educational ladder. It is however a narrow line between doing one’s best and maintaining ‘modesty’ as discussed earlier. Some students appear to attribute their Australian educational experience with having studied at a *juku* through having gained entry to a Japanese university.

Despite the anonymity of the questionnaire, student 43’s comment cited earlier regarding modesty, is potentially reflected in the results of Q14(b), (see above) where no students maintained that to them, the importance of studying hard in class was ‘very important’, despite a not insignificant number of students demonstrated in Table 15(a) having attended *juku* to improve their marks.

Questions 21(a) and (b) explored the use of free time in Japan and expected use in Australia.

Table 21: The use of free time in Japan and the expectation of use in Australia

Activity type	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
	Japan	Japan	Australia	Australia
a) Indoor entertainment	31	16.1	28	14.8
b) Listening to music				
c) Watching movies, TV, video.				
a) Reading a book or	7	3.6	2	1.0

comic.				
a) Exercise b) Playing sports.	23	11.9	29	15.3
a) Social life b) Chatting with friends, c) Drinking, karaoke, socializing, d) Going out - party e) Having a meal in the restaurant f) Playing g) Dance	64	33.3	42	22.2
a) With family members b) Relaxing c) With boyfriend	7	3.6	2	1.0
a) Did whatever was good for the time	1	0.5	0	0
a) Not as much time with friends as in Japan b) Build friendships	0	0	3	1.5
a) More alone than in Japan b) Alone c) At home d) Baking	5	2.6	5	2.6
a) By self in semester	0	0	1	0.5
a) With friends in vacation b) Touring, sightseeing	23	11.9	31	16.4

c) Visiting museums or exhibitions d) Go on a trip e) Going to Hot Spring f) Travel round Australia g) Travel h) Picnic i) Going into the bush, j) Driving, riding motorcycle				
a) Working/ b) Working weekends	8	4.2	6	3.1
a) Education b) Studying c) Library d) Going to Tutions* and Club Activities	7	3.6	12	6.3
a) Doing nothing b) Resting or Relaxing c) sleeping	2	1.0	5	2.6
a) Shopping	12	6.2	6	3.1
b) Misc	1	0.5	9	4.7
a) Not as much as / more than in Japan	0	0	2	1.0
a) Do what I want	0	0	1	0.5
a) Time an issue	0	0	1	0.5
a) No plans	0	0	1	0.5

a) Things I cannot do on weekdays or other times	1	0.5	3	1.5
b) No free time				
c) No free time during semester				
Total	192	100.0	191	100.0

Sixty four responses (33.3%) indicated that in Japan free time was used for social activities, with forty two responses (22.2%) indicating that non study time in Australia would be used for ‘social life’ and related activities. Thirty eight students (19.79%) indicated that, in Japan, they spent their free time on indoor entertainment e.g. watching movies, reading comics, with 30 students (15.8%) holding the same expectation in Australia. Exercise and playing sport was important in Japan to 23 respondents (11.9%), with an expectation by 29 students (15.3%) of similar opportunities in Australia. Some 23 students (11.9%) spent free time in Japan by for example, traveling, sightseeing and visiting museums. There was an expectation in Australian of similar activities held by 31 students (16.4%).

Shopping in Japan was important to 12 students (6.2%), with 6 students (3.1%) expecting this in Australia also. Eight Students had worked part time in Japan (4.2%) with an expectation by 6 students (3.1%) of working in Australia.

Seven students (3.6%) had studied in their free time in Japan or participated in club activities, with an expectation by 12 students, (6.3%), of a similar use of time in Australia. Seven students (3.6%) had spent time with family members or boy/girlfriends. The expectation of this in Australia was held by 2 students (1.0%). Five students (2.6%) indicated that in Japan they were either at home for example baking, or alone. Five students (2.6%) felt that in Australia also, they would be alone.

One student (0.5%) indicated that in Japan he/she did things that could not be carried out at the weekend or at other times. Three students (1.5%) indicated that they would not have any free time during the semester, or would do things that could not be carried out at the weekend or at other times. Two students (1.0%) indicated that in Japan they would do nothing, relax or sleep in their free time. Five students (2.6%) indicated in Australia that this would be the case.

Three students indicated that they would not have as much time with their friends at in Japan and would build friendships in Australia (1.5%). Two students (1.0%) commented that they

undertook miscellaneous activities in their free time in Japan, with 9 students (4.7%) expecting to do this in Australia. Two students (1.0%) commented that they would do not as much in their free time as in Japan, or would do more than they had done in Japan. Three further students commenting that in Australia they would a) do what they wanted (0.5%) b) had no plans (0.5%) or c) time was an issue (0.5%). However, it might be the case that since the research was carried out early in their sojourn, the academic work load was not yet clear to the students and thus their responses pertaining to free time were based upon an as yet unknown time commitment. That only twelve responses (6.3%) indicated that free time would be spent on studying, may reflect the non-academic nature of a Japanese institution as discussed in Chapter 2. However, that a significant number of students felt that their non-study time would be spent with friends can be read in two ways, in that the friends might be classmates and thus the students may be supporting each other either academically or socially, or that the students are indeed enjoying a social life in Australia. The reference to 'tuitions' may refer to participation in a *zemi*. Refer Chapter 2.

Appendix D: Results from the semi-structured interview

Not all questions were asked of all students interviewed, and not all questions were relevant to all students. Responses to questions guided the interview which did not in all cases follow questions sequentially. In some cases the students themselves raised issues that they wished to discuss. Responses covered the following broad areas:

Section One: Expectations regarding the campus

Student	Comment
60	Huge in terms of size, there are better facilities than in Japan especially the provision of a PC which never happens in Japan
81	To be more spacious than in Japan. Foreign dramas on TV only show locker rooms
56	Expected architecture to be different, more like that in the UK or Europe. The only uni I had visited in Japan xxx ¹ had old buildings. Expected a different layout i.e. plans. The student likes the outdoors more than the typical Japanese student, both on campus and in extra curricular activities
73	Not interested
90	No expectations
59	Not interested

¹ Institutional name removed to maintain confidentiality

Section Two: Student expectations regarding the attitude of students to study in Australia

Student	Comment
60	Quite different but it is not Japan compared to Australia but Japan compared to anywhere else. In Australia students go to university to get a qualification. In Japan they go to get a job. What they major in is not important.
81	Australian unis are easy to get into, but hard to get out of [i.e. to

	graduate]. This is the opposite of in Japan. Students must work very hard in Australia
56	I am open minded generally and in terms of academic study it is 'OK' to talk against a lecturer and to contradict if appropriate.
73	I am not interested in the attitude of students to study at the UG level. I wanted supervision, my focus was a good supervisor and good research.
90	They think it is easy, but Australian students do not understand the struggle, they [Japanese students] must spend at least three times as long on their studies and think about the real problem which they must re-describe in another language where things are expressed differently than in Japan. Essay writing is difficult since it is not done in the same way. In English it is intro body conclusion. In Japanese the result comes first which is then explained.
59	No comment

Section Three: Attitude of academic staff to students:

Student	Comment
60	Japanese lecturers have no interest in teaching UG the reason being that the students are not interested. If you email a Japanese professor, few respond. They are very authoritarian and student cannot demand. With overseas professors, especially with international students they were happy to respond.
81	I didn't expect much but they should open up more to students. They say if you have a problem come and see me or just email me. Japanese academics are very formal vs. the informality of Australian academics.
56	I expected academics to be helpful to students - more so than is the case in Japan, expected there to be some social interaction.
73	More or less as in Japan, I am enrolled in a PhD (1) and came here

	for field research. I needed [expected] staff to give good advice re the particular field.
90	People expect international students to be more perfect
59	No comment

(1) A PhD in Japan typically contains a not insignificant amount of coursework

Section Four: Were these attitudes what you had expected?

Student	Comment
60	No
81	No
56	Yes, to a certain extent
73	Yes, better than expected
90	No comment
59	No comment

Section Five: Was there any impact on your learning as a result of this and if so what, if not, why do you think that this is the case?

Student	Comment
60	It made it easier because academic staff were approachable.
81	It was not so easy at first since the course i.e. organised for the basic subjects. This means that in one hour we must cover all that is to appear in the examination. Academic staff say come and see me, but time is needed after the class to appreciate the content of the course / class. This is not just for NESB. When there is a problem it might seem slight or be viewed negatively by the academic that the student does not understand 'xyz'.
56	It helped me to 'learn better'. I felt that my educational background was more international because I did high school in the international school in xxx(1). For Japanese students from

	Japan it would be a big difference, eg the methodology of teaching
73	There were differences in the research field xxx(2) that had not been expected, e.g. regarding when to do the research, and the supervisor helped with this
90	The students become resigned to the difficulties (<i>arikeme</i>) (3)
59	No comment

(1) Country name removed to ensure anonymity.

(2) Research field removed to maintain anonymity

(3) To resign oneself to one's fate.

Section Six: Had you talked to other Japanese students who had were or studying at university in Australia?

Student	Comment
60	Yes
81	Yes
56	No
73	Yes
90	No
59	N/A

Section Seven: Was the information received from them accurate in your case?

Student	Comment
60	No
81	No, the student spoken to exaggerated in a negative way the difficulty. But he/she (1) had failed his/her thesis twice.

56	N/A
73	Yes
90	N/A
59	N/A

(1) Identity of friend removed to maintain anonymity.

Section Eight: Did this help or hinder your learning and in what way

Student	Comment
60	Nil response
81	It hindered because it made me a little protective of myself - I put my guard up. In the first year I was paranoid regarding failure and felt that 'I must learn everything'. Now it is a little easier but I am still not relaxed. In the second year I relaxed, maybe too much?
56	Neither
73	I'd had discussion by email with an ANU student but this was a different university. I wanted to know particularly where would be a better location to undertake the research (Japan or Australia) therefore it was a little different. He/she said that if it was for high quality research then Australia was better, but if it was to get a job then a Japanese uni would be better.
90	I had no idea
59	N/A

Section Nine: In the question ranking the importance of particular study attributes to both the student and their parents, the results of the question 'Is my English good enough' were: 40% students: very important, 40% parents: not very important.

Why do you think that this was the case?

Student	Comment
60	Japanese parents are very insular - they do not understand the need for English. Since it is not required in Japan, they do not see the need for English
81	<p>If I am studying in an English context eg Australia, then English is very important, but parents don't understand since they are not literate in English and so they cannot gauge the level of language required.</p> <p>My parents expect me to return to Japan upon graduation and work in a Japanese context. They appreciate the need for English in Australia but feel that although it is not necessary in Japan it is better to have it.</p>
56	<p>The focus is status, more of a status to go, not to learn. Even if it is just for 3 months ELICOS, where the 'study factor' may be nil, it has status.</p> <p>[The student expected the response to indicate that it was more important to parents, but felt that since this was the student's thoughts re their parents – [there might have been a lack of parental understanding here].</p>
73	Students who come here meet so much difficulty in English. Their parents who have never studied overseas, and have never studied at university do not have much of an idea - they are only interested in the result, they think differently - to Gambaru is OK. But in an English environment they [the students] have to force themselves and they can do it eventually [i.e. study in English].
90	For 'daily English' it is OK for most Japanese students, but may become an issue in complex situations. It was an issue when I was a High School Exchange Student to the US many years ago; I was 17 at the time. My English was excellent after the experience, but I failed the English component of the university entrance exam because I translated the meaning of the sentences not the words

	(1). I lost my self esteem as a result. I think my sons will benefit by living in an English speaking environment. They were 11 and 15 when they came, now they are 18 and 22. Both now work part time in English speaking environments. I had been worried about coming here to study particularly regarding English language training for younger son, who had none at all. The son went into the ESL stream at local High School, did year 11, studied a Pre Foundation Studies Program, then a Foundation Studies Program(2) which he failed. He was enrolled into xxx (3). University and is failing. Older son came to Australia with some English and is undertaking 4 subjects per semester and getting a Pass average. One semester he undertook only 2-3 per subjects and got a distinction.
59	N/A

(1) Refer Duke (1996) for further information on this theme

(2) Refer to Chapter 2 for further information on Foundation Studies Programs

(3) Institutional name withheld to maintain confidentiality

In the question considering the importance of ‘Who to depend upon if I have a problem’, 12% of students and 30% of parents said that this was very important, with 19% of students and 4% of parents saying that this was not important at all.

Section Ten: Why do you think that people thought in this way?

Student	Comment
60	The concept of the 'guardian' is very important in Japan, there is a parental expectation that the students will live at home and be dependent upon their parents. There are two different worlds one for the parents, one for the students. The problem is, how can I [the parent] explain to others in Japan what you are doing?
81	In some ways my parents are very worried about me and call if they do not hear from me. They would appreciate a guardian. When I first came to Australia, a former friend was here and my parents were reassured. I call them regularly to reassure them

	since if they hear nothing they think that I have been killed in Australia and will hear nothing until someone knocks on their door.
56	There is status is having a guardian, and for the parents to be able to contact someone if there is a problem is important. The same applies for the student. This is particularly the case when it is the students first time away from home. You need to remember that the parental 'comment ' is based upon the understanding by the student.
73	The big reason is that they are parents and parents always worry and they would probably like a guardian here [i.e. in Australia] for their children. If the family have friends or relatives here the parents would probably feel more comfortable.
90	It would depend upon the type of problem, there is a <i>kohai / sempai</i> (1) system but it perhaps just Japanese students helping Japanese students.
59	No Comment

(1) Refer Chapter 2 regarding *kohai / sempai*

Section Eleven: When asked how they saw themselves, the majority of the students said 'Average'. Do you think that this is true and does it reflect the typical Japanese student in Australia?

Student	Comment
60	In Australia, the majority of Japanese students still like to speak Japanese, they will go to a Japanese Study Abroad agent just to speak Japanese. (1)
81	It is hard to excel in any course. This course (2) is "Very Difficult", only 10% go on to honours: none are international students. Australian students are very smart - very clever they can keep everything in their brain. In a practicum session where the patient has 'xyz', and where the student must come up with a course of action, the Australian students take half the time to

	respond since they can think critically and evaluate the situation. Japan students lack critical analysis and the ability to think for self. They go step 1 step 2 - what has been learned. From the given information, Australian students can organise their thoughts very quickly.
56	1) Either students really do not know, or they are being modest. 2) Average means: i) not wishing to stand out in a crowd. ii) at the bottom, but saying average to feel good iii) at the top, but as a sign of modesty iv) the truth - they really are average
73	Things might be different these days but students do not like to put themselves too high - Japanese people do not like people who boast themselves.
90	Fear of failure since there is a kudos in being in Australia. When my son failed in high school in Aust (see above) he felt rejected. It is the egoism of the parents to send their children to Australia – they [the children] are seen as an asset, like gold.
59	N/A

(1) This response, whilst not directly pertaining to the question, is of importance, since it may pertain to ‘remaining Japanese’. As such, it may be worthy of further research.

(2) Program withheld to maintain anonymity

Section Twelve:

When asked how important it was to them in Japan to balance study and social life, the majority of people said extremely important. Did you expect to be able to do this in Australia? Has this been the case?

Student	Comment
60	The priority was study, social life is important and it is easier to balance it here. Assignments are hard here, but mentally there is less stress. In Japan many students do not go to class since they work part time although they are often supported by parents and do not need the money.
81	The expectation was more to study. In the first year I was alone - but it has pretty much been the case – it took a lot of time to develop a close circle of Asian friends and that has helped a lot. We understand each other.
56	Yes, I was brought up to believe that this balance is really important, but I am tending to the social at the moment.
73	Yes but I'm struggling. For postgraduate students the aim is clearer, i.e. for study or research. But since I am in another country I feel the need to see people, make friends – the human touch. In Japan I live with my parents so there isn't the same need. For undergraduate students it is difficult for another reason – [in Japan] undergraduate students do not study so much – they can just socialise.
90	<p>In his teachers' opinion in high school days, eldest son did not balance them, but now is an excellent student!</p> <p>I had been an O jo sama [A well bred young lady]. Study was to either look for a husband or to be more marketable. The social side was as important as the study side, it was a sector of society.</p> <p>Now anyone with money can become an 'O jo sama'.</p> <p>(Refer to chapter 2 for further information)</p>
59	N/A

Section Thirteen: When asked how important it was to the in Japan to always do their best the majority of people said extremely important. Did they expect to be able to do this in Australia? No / Yes, Has this been the case?

Student	Comment
60	Yes, but I am too busy. Four units each semester is too hard. Four classes per week for 2 hours each is more than I had anticipated.
81	I expected to do my best and survive. I am trying to do my best.
56	To do your best is best, but it is not always possible.
73	No because English is a problem – writing in academic English. I am trying to do my best but I have to ask my supervisor to help in English. But if I write it in Japanese there is no need to ask.
90	Yes, and I am able to do so but my sons are not able to do so
59	N/A

Section Fourteen: Many people thought that they would not be the same in Australia as in Japan because of ‘difference’. Other than the fact the language of instruction here is English, what do you think that expectation was?

Student	Comment
60	Many Japanese students in Australia are very polite - more so than in Japan. This is due to the 'shame culture'(1). Australia is still strange even after having lived here for 3 years.
81	I often comes across situation where feel 'I am very Japanese' eg through my way of thinking so I realise that I am Japanese in Australia, but I do not feel typical Japanese. I feel a little Aussie in Japan! Appearing 'westernised' can be seen as snobbish in Japan. Now I find it hard to see xyz in Japan as standard and cannot decide where 'home' will be. I am attracted to Japan but the total life experience there will be less. Where to live is a big problem and

	had not been anticipated when I came to Australia. I assumed at that time that I would return to Japan upon graduation.
56	<p>The attitude to life that is the norm here is different to that in Japan since you have to mould yourself into it.</p> <p>Here in Australia it is very different. In Japan you must have a solid mentality - you must be right all the time, here, you must be more flexible for example train times. The tolerance level here is higher than in Japan. Young people want to stand out from the crowd - there is group mentality in the crowd. The individual in Australia must let others into the group.</p>
73	For undergraduates it is very different since they are expected to study. For postgraduates it depends more on the individual case for example supervision, the area of study and also the facilities. I meet my supervisor once a week, though normal is monthly.
90	Things are not so different if you go deeper into the mind and one's philosophy. My youngest son had cried that no one loved him. He had been drinking beer and this, the alcohol is what had made him cry. Elder brother and I said that he must be seen to <i>gambaru</i> – then people would appreciate him. (2)
59	Language. I cannot perform as well as if in Japan. It is not really possible to develop a relationship with academic staff when getting 'mass education' - not an intensive learning process. I had expected a more personal relationship with academic staff but this is not possible in the course being undertaken (3) since there are about 300 students in most classes. It is almost identical to Japanese UG studies. Academics do not know the students, it is 'who are you' when they are approached. I had been an exchange student in the USA I feel that my study there was more formal than here in Australia.

(1) Linked to saving face

(2) Refer to Chapter 2 for further information

(3) Program name removed to maintain anonymity

Section Fifteen: Many people received a lot of help from classmates when in high school in Japan. Did you expect to receive the same support from classmates here at your university in Australia?

Yes: 1) Did you receive that support? 2) If not why not?

No: 1) Why did you not expect it?

2) What sort of support and assistance did you expect to receive from academic staff in Australia?

3) Did you receive that support?

Yes /No - Why do you think that this was the case?

Student	Comment
60	<p>1) There was an expectation of independence since international students at my university in Japan when I was at the undergraduate level seemed very independent and I thought that this was 'foreign culture'. It is hard in Japan to do what you want especially for women above thirty. Jobs and scholarships are hard to come by.</p> <p>2) I had studied Comparative Studies in Australia where the staff gave 'clues' and information about how to write a book review.</p> <p>3) I asked for help, and yes, I received it. This information cannot be asked for in Japan</p>
81	<p>1) Some students were really helpful, students are so dependent upon writing skills / style for taking notes and I am a slow writer - if I miss a major point I will ask friends and others for notes to copy.</p> <p>When I don't understand the concept, I talk to students and other friends. These friends are mainly Asian Australians who I hang out with. It is a little embarrassing because they are younger than me. There is another Japanese student in my course but he is male and this stops me from asking for help. I feel a slight Caucasian phobia - an inferiority complex and Caucasian Australians are a</p>

	<p>little intimidating.</p> <p>2) I did not have ‘much of an idea’ when initially came to Australia, but I did received tutoring support.</p> <p>3) I received clarification regarding facts and assignments. I didn’t receive support unless it was an officially organised lecture. After lectures I talk to friends first and if is still unclear I email or visit the academic. I have a peer support network, but in Japan students are independent and tend to work alone. Australian students are able to receive past exam question papers and offer to give other students help, but I feel that I have no right to it - it is materialistic – I am not entitled to it if nothing is being giving back in return. I feel as though this is begging and think that I must give something back. Another student said to me ‘You are too shy - come and talk to us’.</p>
56	<p>1)Yes, but to a lesser extent.</p> <p>1) University is bigger and so you cannot share - but you can rely on one or two classmates.</p> <p>2) People are doing different courses with different lectures. I worked this out before I came so it did not ‘come as a shock’.</p> <p>I had no idea in terms of what support might be available from academic staff.</p> <p>3) Support is there when requested.</p> <p>The prospectus said that support was there but it is through me approaching the academic - it is not spoon feeding, students have to stand on own two feet and go after them [academic staff].</p>
73	<p>1) Yes, but not a lot. It is good to have other PG colleagues since research causes a lot of stress. I just expected the supervisor to help - i.e. academic supervision and practical advice about conducting the research.</p> <p>2) Talking with other students is helpful since I cannot study effectively sometimes and I feel that can never finish and that the</p>

	'piece of paper' is the most important thing in life now. 3) Being a young girl (+/- 28yrs) in this field of research is hard.
90	1) I received a little help in written English but paid a tutor initially for my sons. Youngest son had no English when we came and went to an International Course in English in an Australian high school and had a very, very, very hard time. He felt a failure. (1)
59	I expected more support particularly smaller groups, and I expected the University to be more selective in who they accept. It seems to be 'if you apply you will get in'. Eighty percent of the students in the course are PRC. This was not expected in Australia.

(1) The student's focus was the two sons, rather than her own situation.

Section Sixteen: Some students thought that going to *juku* helped them to get to Australia either by helping them to get into a better university in Japan, or by assisting with their language skills. Do you agree?

Why / not?

Student	Comment
60	Yes, <i>juku</i> in Japan does help you to get into a better uni but, to go to university overseas the relationship between the universities is important. eg xxxx(1a) and xxxx(1b) are not a good match, [In other words who does the home uni work with - 'placing them' in the educational culture overseas].
81	Yes, in that going to a good uni in Japan gives a connection to other unis overseas for example for exchange, but my English Language skills were not helped - it was 'basic stuff' for example grammar. I am from a rural area and for country people university opportunities can be difficult, because there are few universities in these areas. There aren't many <i>jukus</i> in these areas and so the public high schools pay more attention to English because of this. I learned English production, speaking and writing skills in an

	ELICOS college but the basic grammar from Japan helped.
56	I agree that students can get into better universities. My cousin went to a <i>juku</i> - and although his/her English did not improve he/she was able to get into Todai. [Tokyo University]. Parents say 'my child is at Todai', the student asks - yes but doing what? So yes <i>juku</i> can help entry to a better university.
73	Yes, in that it helped better than high school did. Many of the top universities are not so keen on international activities and so some programs are not advanced strongly.
90	No comment
59	I think in some ways yes, about getting into better university, but I don't agree that it helps people to get to Australia. It does not help people to grow and develop. The big famous and not so famous [universities] provide exposure to international education and so there are many opportunities in Japan to go overseas from both the famous and not famous unis. <i>Juku</i> is not necessary therefore to help in going OS. I am not sure that <i>juku</i> gets you into a better university in Australia.

(1a) Japanese university name removed to maintain confidentiality

(1b) Australian university name removed to maintain confidentiality

Section Seventeen: 1) Who do you spend most of your time with here? 2) Is this what you expected?

Student	Comment
60	University friends, this is what I expected.
81	1) Asian Australians. 2) No, Japanese students are dreaming if they think they will be spending time with Caucasians. I feel more comfortable with Asian Australians, they are more understanding since English is often their second language and

	they have more time to listen.
56	1) Australian friends 2) I would like Japanese friends but Aussie friends and South East Asian friends are a better category. Japanese people do not always see Japanese students [who have not been brought up in Japan – <i>Kikokushijo</i> as Japanese] (1).
73	1) My landlady. (2) 2) More or less – to spend time with housemates.
90	My sons
59	1) Friends are not Japanese, classmates are about 5% Australian. I don't know many people but I think that Asians are easy to get along with. But they do not have enough money to do things and so socialising is difficult. At the moment my friends are a Kenyan, two Chinese friends and a Japanese friend who I knew in Japan.

(1) The student did not grow up in Japan.

(2) There appeared to be a pre-existing link between the student and the 'landlady'.

Section Eighteen: When asked to describe self, most people said that they were shy, did not like to lead discussion and preferred to just listen. Do you think that this characteristic would affect their learning?

Student	Comment
60	In Japan no one expresses themselves and no one cares or helps, people think that 'just sitting in class' is OK. After class students can get information from the lecturer on that area. It is easier if the professor is interested in Asian culture. Girls are not so shy, it is the guys who are more shy, they rarely ask questions.
81	This is exactly me, but I cannot help it, I cannot be something I'm not. In Japan I could lead discussion and could speak up more. I feel that all the students around have better ideas and ability to get discussion going. I do not want to 'muck up' the situation and know that through 'unhelpful ideas' classmates expect students to

	be an average student. I need more brainstorming training, I did some as part of a study only, not as part of the course.
56	It hinders - everyone is shy at first but just listening will not help study - or anything else. Many Japanese do not like to be outgoing i.e. to step outside the group, but if more stepped outside the group it would reduce bullying(1). Historically stepping outside the group was frowned upon.
73	It depends, it is case by case, up to the people and the situation - sometimes it helps, but it is more important to listen and to not project your own idea. There are pushy people in Japan also. It is difficult because if you are listening people expect your turn next and in Australia no one waits for other to speak. In Australia 'discussion' is a different way of interacting than in Japan, where people are given time or room for their idea and to think (2). In Japan people expect to listen to each other. Japanese students wait for their turn.
90	Yes, it is to do with pride, they want to present themselves 100% but they do not want to make a mistake – but they cannot say enough in English. Their silence is fear, this is ' <i>hazukashi</i> '(3) dignity or pride is at risk. They cannot 'meet' the experience without experiencing this.
59	It does not help, if you as a student cannot contribute - you are not appreciated. If people speak out they will be challenged by others with different opinions. 'Training' is a good word to use to describe what Japanese students need to be able to contribute in class. There are no opportunities in Japan for discussion and so the students may need help to be trained to speak their minds, but there is a fear of being criticised or rejected.

(1) At the time of the research bullying in Japanese high school was a serious social issue.

(2) This relates to *chinmoku*: refer to Chapter 2.

(3) Embarrassment

Section Nineteen: How do you think that Japanese students could be encouraged to participate more in discussion

60	Japanese students who are interested in Australia can be matched up with Australian students interested in Japan, eg those who have lived or studied there.
81	For most discussion tasks, the time limit is 20 mins for group consideration. More time is needed to appreciate the other students' thoughts but I know that spontaneous thoughts are good. We need more brainstorming training – I did some as a study only, not as part of class. In the 1st and 2nd grade in Primary school in Japan, students have their hands up all the time. By 4th and 5th grade students have become quiet and just listen. They are trying too hard to be good students; it is peer pressure. It is the same for Japanese students in Australia.
56	The concern is re speaking English: small group tutorials up to about 10 people with Japanese students would help. Also involving local people with Japanese and English language skills to develop friendships that then lead to involvement in the larger society. Japanese students would then feel more comfortable speaking English.
73	You (Australians) should become accustomed to my (Japanese) way. You tell Japanese students to speak more – but they need to learn practical ways of debate, and they need to have confidence in their English and in their ideas - they can learn. They need to change their attitude when listening in a lecture - they need to listen intentionally, waiting (in a discussion) is a good way. I want Australian students to function in the same way that Japanese students do. I don't want Australian students to think that Japanese students are stupid.
59	We have to 'lift the fear', but this means obtaining training from Kindy level: this can happen in Australia but not in Japan.

	Students need help to speak their mind.
90	Softly support the students, don't stare at them, their silence is fear. Create an easy atmosphere, don't criticize their English. Irrelevant comments are also made though fear.

Section Twenty: What were your expectations regarding the role of academic staff outside of formal academic settings eg lectures or tutorials? Were those expectations met? Why do you think that this is the case?

60	At the undergraduate level teachers in Japan arranged trips, often study related, but they didn't at the postgraduate level other than for dinners or drinking at the end of class. However the <i>zemi</i> *(1) was common, discussion groups of 20-30 students who are given a controversial issue each, they have to give a presentation to the group and speak, communicating with the students and the professor. The influence that the professor can have on getting a job is why most students join a <i>zemi</i> .
81	None regarding social activities. Regarding lecturers, I differentiate by the ranking of the academic and I always look first at the academic's title on the door.
56	Be friendly at least and socialise at the end of semester and at other times. My expectation was met to an extent; some who students really like will go to the local pub. It is hammered into Japanese students from Elementary school that teaching staff have authority.
73	Not so much in way of expectations re socialising - in Japan it is up to the personal character of the academic. There is more socialising at the postgraduate level in Japan, not so much at the undergraduate level. No real experience of this here in Australia.
59	None at all.
90	None other than a friendly chat in the corridor, it helps when they

	show that they remember me.
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(1) From the English word 'seminar': refer to Chapter 2.

Section Twenty-One What would you say was the most difficult aspect of study for Japanese students in Australia and what could Australian universities do to help them

60	Making English speaking friends - Japanese are basically shy. Develop cultural exchange - chatting and taking excursions.
81	There are few Japanese students on my campus - I am not aware of how they are doing. But Japanese students are not accustomed to the 'if you need help...' and it is a big step to take. Notices in Japanese saying it is OK to seek help, etc would be reassuring. Groups of other nationalities, and signs in their language especially Chinese, are much more visible. There are few Japanese societies, if any on campus, and few Japanese students.
56	For some to get away from home is No.1, the most difficult. For others - homesickness and disorientation. In Japan there is a system you can go with, here a buddy system would help.
73	For undergraduates, they don't know that Australian unis want them to study. They need emotional support for living overseas and help with English, clear help for example, writing in academic English. Japanese high school students do not write essays. 'How to study' lessons would help. For postgraduates, they know what they want to study.
59	Japanese are good at criticising another, but do not give an opinion in discussion. There is a difference between undergraduate discussion and postgraduate discussion. The balance between confrontation and discussion.
90	Language

Section Twenty Two: 1) Did you think that you would be told what to study and how to study by your lecturers? 2) Why was this expectation? 3) Why do you think that this expectation was not met?

60	<p>1) Yes</p> <p>2) I didn't do essays in Japan so how can I do them in English?</p> <p>3) Academics cannot be specific because of the rules they cannot say read this book or write in this style. - but they tell the student the type of information to find.</p>
81	<p>1) Yes, but would appreciate more details – give the objectives.</p> <p>2) I received as much as I had expected, but did not expect it to be so hard.</p> <p>3) It takes more time - not just memory.</p>
56	<p>1) For how to study 'no', for what to study 'yes', i.e. a syllabus and I received this for the most part. This information is always provided in Japan - the what and the how.</p> <p>2) <i>Juku</i> teach the HOW!</p>
73	<p>1) I brought the topic here, but needed [expected?] a good supervisor to help re changing ideas and direction.</p>
59	<p>Nil response</p>
90	<p>1) Yes, but would appreciate more details - give the objectives.</p> <p>2) I received as much as I had expected but didn't expect to find 'learning' so hard.</p>

Section Twenty Three: Talking to lecturers was the area of study difficulty that seemed to cause the most problems: can you explain why you think that this is the case and how this difficulty affects the learning process?

60	In Japan, lecturers are authoritarian, and seniors must be respected. Here lecturers are just like a friend. Students can learn via a text book if they are shy – this is harder, or they can ask questions and utilise the academic which is easier. But students can ask anything.
81	1) If the student's problem is a major thing, the student will talk to lecturer, if minor problem to classmates, but if the student leaves it too late, a minor problem it can become a major problem. I am concerned that minor problems (to me) will frustrate the lecturer and that I will be seen as being too dependent. I am also concerned that I will be seen by academics as 'knowing nothing' when I ask something about subtle issues. It is intimidating to ask the academic to go over 'x' again and again and so I ask classmates.
56	My level of communication is not high enough, I couldn't get hold of the lecturer or did not know how to. Sometimes due to the authoritarian figure of the academic.
73	Undergraduate students need confidence in English and themselves, and calling the supervisor by the first name. At first it is Dr... At the postgraduate level they are closer to the supervisor and might have more confidence regarding self and some research experience already. Course work – I am not sure.
59	Nil Response
90	Nil Response

Section Twenty Four: Many students talked about Australian students as being relaxed, casual, not studying hard, being outgoing, friendly, independent, outspoken, lively. How do you think your family would respond if you were to take on some of these 'Aussie' attributes?

60	1) My parents would be happy that I had studied overseas. Whilst overseas I can be relaxed and independent and outspoken and it is OK, but upon return my parents but would say you're not lovely - they want their children to <i>amae sugi</i> (1). 2) Some parents send parcels of food and clothing to their children when at uni - especially to boys. My brother was more dependent
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	<p>upon our parents and showed more <i>amae</i>. He left home at 22, I left home at 18.</p> <p>3) It is all right to be independent and outspoken, but the parent's want their dependency.</p>
81	<p>1) All are positive but, in some cases.</p> <p>2) My friend said that he/she was 'too sharp' too selfish / independent / explores opportunities too much.</p> <p>3) Parents see some attributes as positive since my study is health related and this gives the student authority, but this can be seen as arrogant and selfish, people expect modesty, it is a social expectation.</p>
56	<p>1) My parents would care to a degree since this is their money.</p> <p>2) Being too relaxed would be a slight problem</p>
73	<p>Regarding study:</p> <p>1) It is very hard when compared to Japanese unis.</p> <p>2) It is not hard when compared to Japanese high school.</p> <p>3) On the one hand the student become 'so rude' - it is OK to call your lecturer by the first name - you become so strong / independent / mature - these are all seen as both positive and negative.</p>
59	<p>1) They think that I am western now and do not expect me to be a 'Model Japanese'.</p> <p>2) In Japan people do like to see people being 'Western Japanese', people think that they are just trying to be cool.</p>
90	<p>Nil Response</p>

I Amae Refer Chapter 2. *Sugi*: shortened form of *sugiru* (too much), in this context, making the parents feel needed.

Section Twenty Five: Have you been able to have free time whilst here? How have you spent that time?

60	Yes recently, I stayed at home or went to the library and travelled around the Sydney region.
81	You can make free time. I relax at home or on the internet, I crave for <i>kanji</i> to read and read on-line novels, or go to gigs. I shop with friends but a different style of shopping than in Japan, my friends shop for clothes - but since there is no big stimulation, so I shop for cds.(1)
56	Yes, most of the time. My time is spent mainly with friends or shopping - there was no shopping in Africa! (2) Or alone at home relaxing.
73	Yes – I go to movies with friends, or go drinking or go to friend’s house. That’s mix of social and study.
59	Nil response
90	Nil response

(1) Compact discs

(2) Student grew up in Africa.

Section Twenty Six: Many students thought that despite the difficulties, study was easier here than in than in Japan, do you agree?

60	Yes, academic staff are organised here and prepare for class. Japanese academics just read what they have published.
81	To be in study mode is easy, how social you are is your choice. In the same culture the relationship is heavier - the expectation is that you will do the same as at home and the peer pressure is strong. In Japan I would socialise more with classmates but it is (<i>giri</i>) (1). Time is an issue in Australia.

56	Most probably yes, because if something is wrong you fail. The time the academic puts in to preparation equates with the quality of the teaching. You can get notes here which you cannot in Japan. There is a more lenient or flexible study system here. Academics here teach.
73	At undergraduate there is more direction applicable in Australia. In Japan no one expects undergraduate students to study. At postgraduate in Japan, postgraduate students study, but some shit unis are not so serious at the postgraduate level either.
59	Japanese university is so easy students are just an audience – although some, eg Todai (2), are hard.
90	Nil Response

(1) *Giri* obligation - refer Chapter 2.

(2) *Todai*: Tokyo University

Section Twenty Seven: What role did your parents play in your coming to Australia and how do they view the experience you are undertaking here?

60	No involvement.
81	My parents opposed but a former friend was here studying and hoping to migrate: this person made me come to learn English. My parents appreciated his/her experience.
56	1) They were pretty easy wherever I went. 2) I chose Australia by myself. Why? Don't know yet! 3) Half of his/her class (1) went to the US. 4) The UK was out because of the weather. 5) Australia has the outback experience not just an educational experience.
73	1) They pay the tuition and are 'sort of' OK about it. 2) Since field is Anthropology they were told the importance of

	field research.
59	Nil Response
90	Nil

(1) Level of class unknown

Section Twenty Eight: Many people said that their parents would be the happiest upon your graduation but also said that parents or friends would not care if they did not finish on time and had to study here longer. Can you explain this?

60	<p>1) Parents have no expectations since they do not really know much, but a US University is felt to give an advantage.</p> <p>2) Older people think that the No 1 priority is Japan. 3) Most people in Japan don't even know the names of Australian universities.</p>
81	<p>1) A lot of students fail one or two subjects in Japan; a third would fail something.</p> <p>2) In Japan all results are 'A' or 'B' - the standard is very different and very high marks are given.</p> <p>3) With very few exceptions an overseas degree means little and does not reflect the hard work and means little regarding the time taken.</p>
56	<p>1) Many parents do not understand, it is a different language and educational system so parents cannot really say anything.</p> <p>2) The cost of the process is related to the expectation of graduation.</p> <p>3) In Japan it is totally different, it would be World War 3 if students fail.</p> <p>4) It is natural that the student would be the happiest upon graduation.</p>

73	<p>Undergraduate: 1) In Japan entering university is important, not graduating.</p> <p>2) It is OK to not graduate and this may be more the case at the top universities where students take exams, for example for the Diplomatic Corp at 20 years of age, in the 3rd year of university. If they are successful, the student will quit uni - this (i.e. entering the Diplomatic Corp), is seen as being very good.</p> <p>3) The status is entering the university. For postgraduate it is slightly different - they chose to enter university and they have to finish with a degree.</p> <p>4) Humanities degrees often take longer - and this is OK.</p>
59	<p>In my family to not graduate was worse than not getting in. The reputation of the university was all that was of importance.</p>
90	<p>1) Many parents are not aware of what their kids are doing, neither of my parents went to university and do not understand the system in Japan or overseas.</p> <p>2) They are more concerned regarding the student's personal life and support network.</p> <p>3) In Japan where the system is understood by parents they are eager to know what is going on.</p>

Section Twenty-Nine

- 1) Do you think you will be the same person returning to Japan?
- 2) In what ways do you think you will/ might have changed?
- 3) How will your family view this?

60	<p>1)No</p> <p>2) I will be more independent, confident in self, but I don't care because in Japan you must care about what others think or say.</p> <p>3) They gave up.</p>
81	<p>1) No</p>

	<p>2) Confidence - I am overly so for Japan, it will be perceived as being arrogant and westernised.</p> <p>3) I am the clever one in the family so it doesn't matter if you are the arrogant one.</p> <p>4) My mother always thought that I was very clever and that it was a miracle that she had produced me!</p> <p>5) She is a pure and naive woman</p> <p>6) My mother sees her self as an average person but she is wonderful, remembers everyone and is great at interacting.</p>
56	<p>1) Yes if it is to Japan.</p> <p>2) I will have a higher tolerance level and be more broad minded.</p> <p>3) For the better.</p>
73	<p>1) No - the basic part of myself will not change but I might be more interested in Japanese minorities and Japanese history.</p> <p>2) If I have changed this cannot be helped - children change anyway.</p>
59	I am going to US to marry – but my sons are staying here.
90	Nil Response

Section Thirty: What aspect of Japan and Japanese culture do you miss the most here in Australia?

60	Japanese punctuality and the sensitive aspect of the culture, eg in interpersonal relationships. Japanese politeness is necessary in some cases.
81	The unspoken understanding that exists in Japan. You do not need to express yourself in detail in Japan but you need detail here.
56	<p>1) The variety of Japanese foods</p> <p>2) The old Japanese culture,</p> <p>3) The culture of summer - <i>natsu matsuri</i>(1)</p>

73	1) It depends: <i>Manga</i> (2) / Food/ in Japan people dress more fashionably.2) subtle things like this.
59	Nil Response
90	The long artistic history including cultural issues regarding food and the philosophy behind it. (3)

(1) Summer Festivals held all over Japan in July and August and an integral part of the community

(2) Comic books read by young and often older people

(3) The student is referring to typical Japanese cuisine, the content and presentation of which is typically based on Zen Buddhist cuisine/culture.

A number of points were raised by either the researcher or the participating students based upon comments made that did not necessarily pertain to the questions or points raised in the semi structured interview:

60	<p>1) Asian Friends have similar concepts even if they are from different countries because they all come from a Confucian Heritage background. They have similar concepts such as a hierarchical culture even though they have different thoughts. The only difference in some ways is that the Japanese economy is more developed.</p> <p>2) Anyone can do the Public Service Examination but Todai students are often offered the public service position prior to the exam.</p> <p>3) Some people blame the Chinese criminal culture in Japan on students.</p> <p>4) There is victim support in Japan but no offender support.</p> <p>6) In Kansai where there are numbers of Burakumin(1); there are special schools.</p>
81	It is not 'cool' to say I'm studying, and it is similar in Japan - but everyone has a work load. I think it is OK to say to friends that you are stressed.

56	Nil
73	Nil
59	I came to Australia since it is cheaper than in Japan, and in Japan people don't know the different universities. They [the students] are getting the same for less money and this is a good deal. My main purpose to come (to Australia), is for Permanent Residence. (2)
90	I have little interaction with other students from Asia. Japan is an island nation and looks down upon and discriminates against other Asian nations especially China and Korea. Japan 'excludes' the difference and the uniqueness of foreigners - they don't like it. However, they love things European – think of brand name bags etc, and British things like afternoon tea. They do not feel this way regarding the US but many Japanese students study there. My sons hate Chinese people and will not associate with them, they look down on them here in Australia. They won't go to Chinatown - 'they discriminate'.

(1) Japanese minority group discriminated against. Refer Chapter 2

(2) The student left quickly to attend a migration seminar.

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