

Micro modules: eLearning for the international education sector

An introduction to micro modules and sector-specific
credentials

Chris Beard, International Education Assoc Aotearoa

ISANA NZ

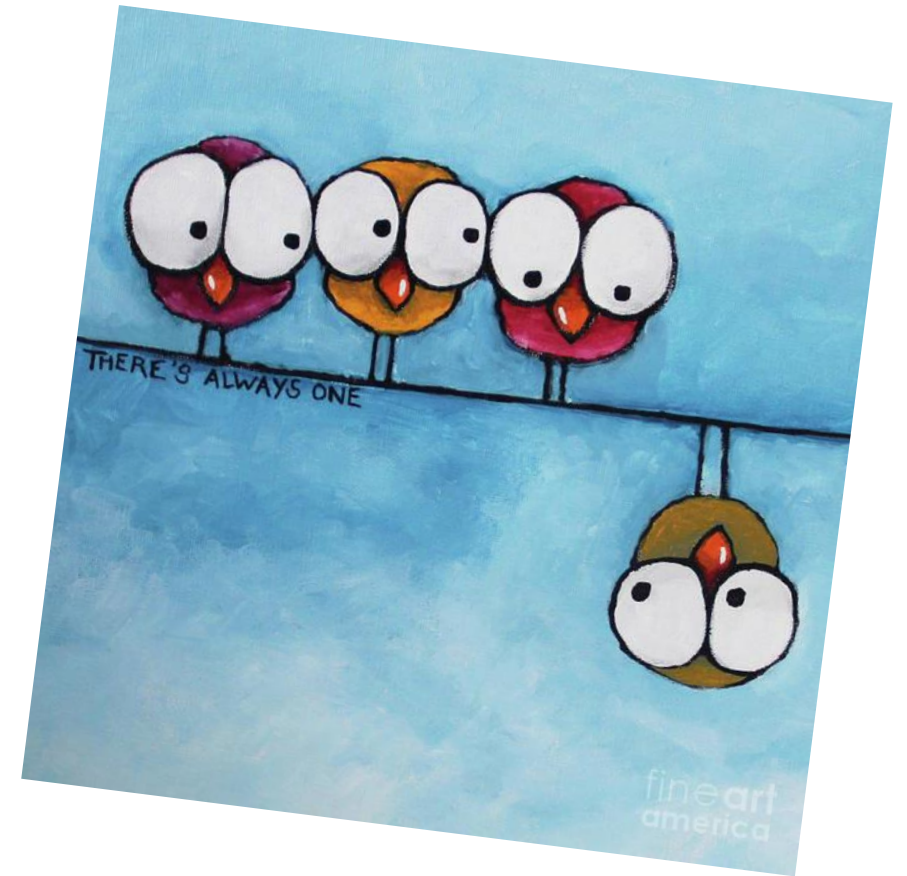
The international education sector

- Why do we do what we do?
- What are predictors of success?
- How is tailored practice for international learners defined and measured?



The strange state of play

- The international education sector is set apart as a lead export sector without its own specialist profession. WHY?
- Theory-to-practice models for the tailored support of international learners are lacking
- Yet interdisciplinary insights are needed to drive innovation and risk mitigation

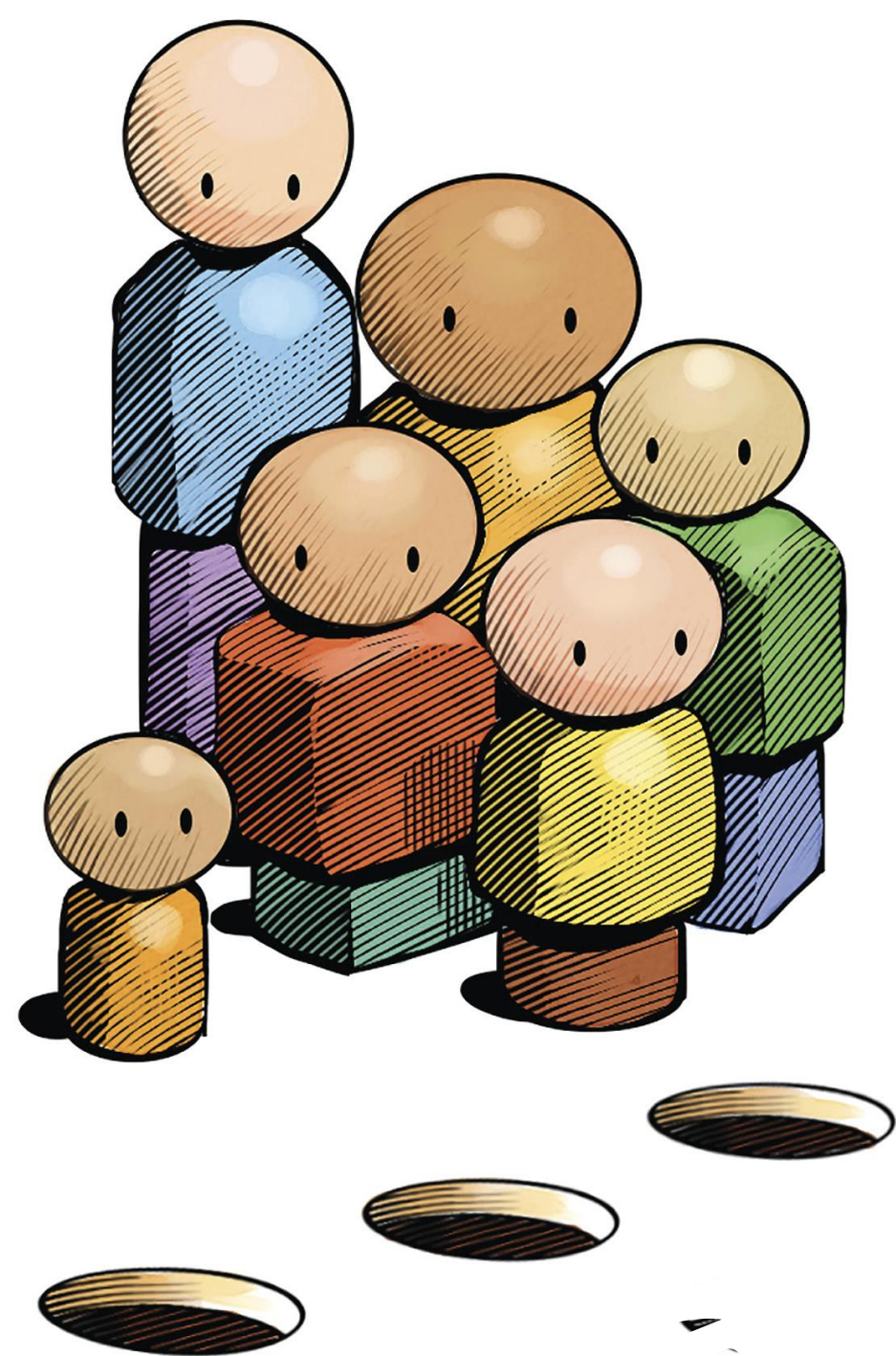


Risks associated with one-size-fits-all

A key goal for student service providers and teachers is to avoid one-size-fits-all practice

But if you have learners from high power distance societies, the potential for *providing services-in-waiting for service-shy students* is fairly high

PAIR QUESTION: In your workplace, how do you gauge the extent to which you adopt a tailored approach to international learners?



Acknowledging the mental health crisis



Mental health of young Australians: dealing with a public health crisis

Patrick D McGorry, David Coghill and Michael Berk
Med J Aust II doi: 10.5694/mja2.52047
Published online: 24 July 2023

The mental health of young Australians is rapidly declining

Almost a quarter of young Kiwis struggling with mental health - report

Nadine Roberts · 04:00, Feb 15 2023



First onset of mental health disorders

“The peak age of first onset was at 15 years old, with a median age of onset of 19 for men and 20 for women,”

McGrath et al (Sep 2023), *Lancet Psychiatry*

In other words, within the range of many international students



A 3D rendering of a puzzle with one red piece standing out among grey pieces. The puzzle is set against a dark background on the left and a light background on the right. The red piece is the central focus, positioned in the middle-right area of the frame. The lighting creates soft shadows and highlights on the puzzle pieces, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

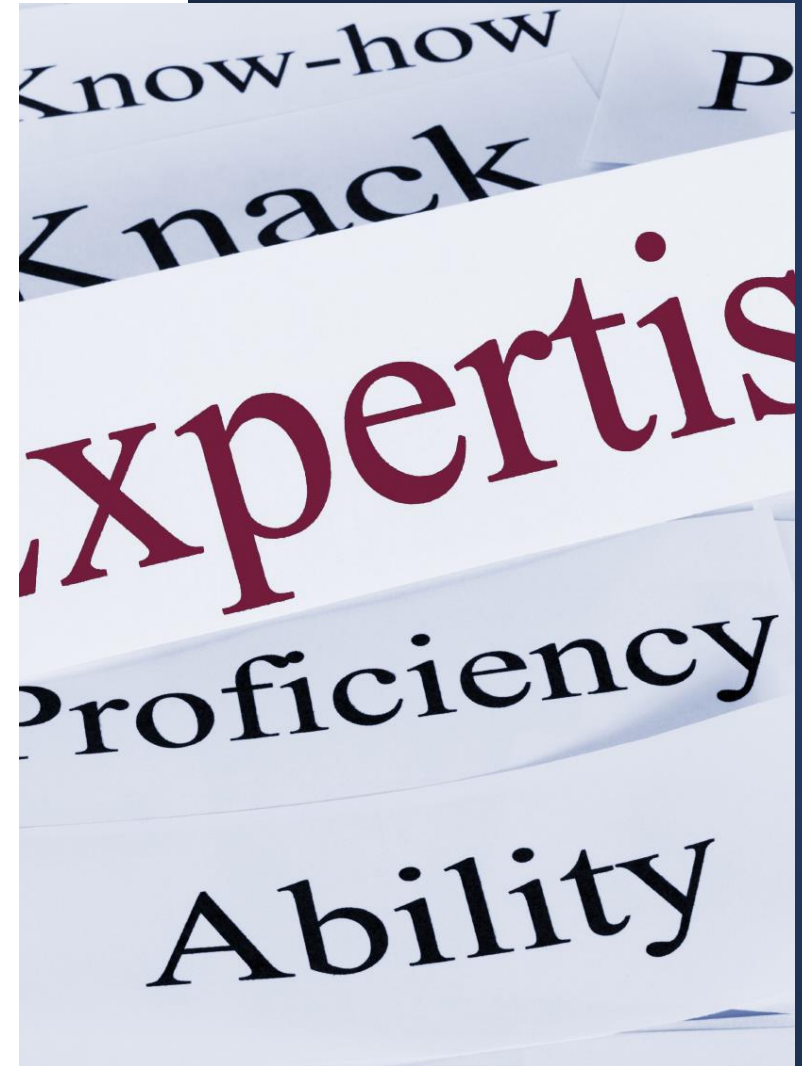
Conundrum

Um ...

if we're struggling to cater to our own young people (including new settlers), why are we inviting tens of thousands of international students into the country, many of whom bring their own mental health issues?

The case for a specialist profession

- Intercultural expertise is needed to address the complexities of cross-border dynamics
- International education specialists will assist our understanding of intercultural exchange in education contexts
- These insights will not only benefit the wellbeing of international learners, but also assist with strengthening social cohesion in diverse host communities



A micro module: Capturing intercultural expertise

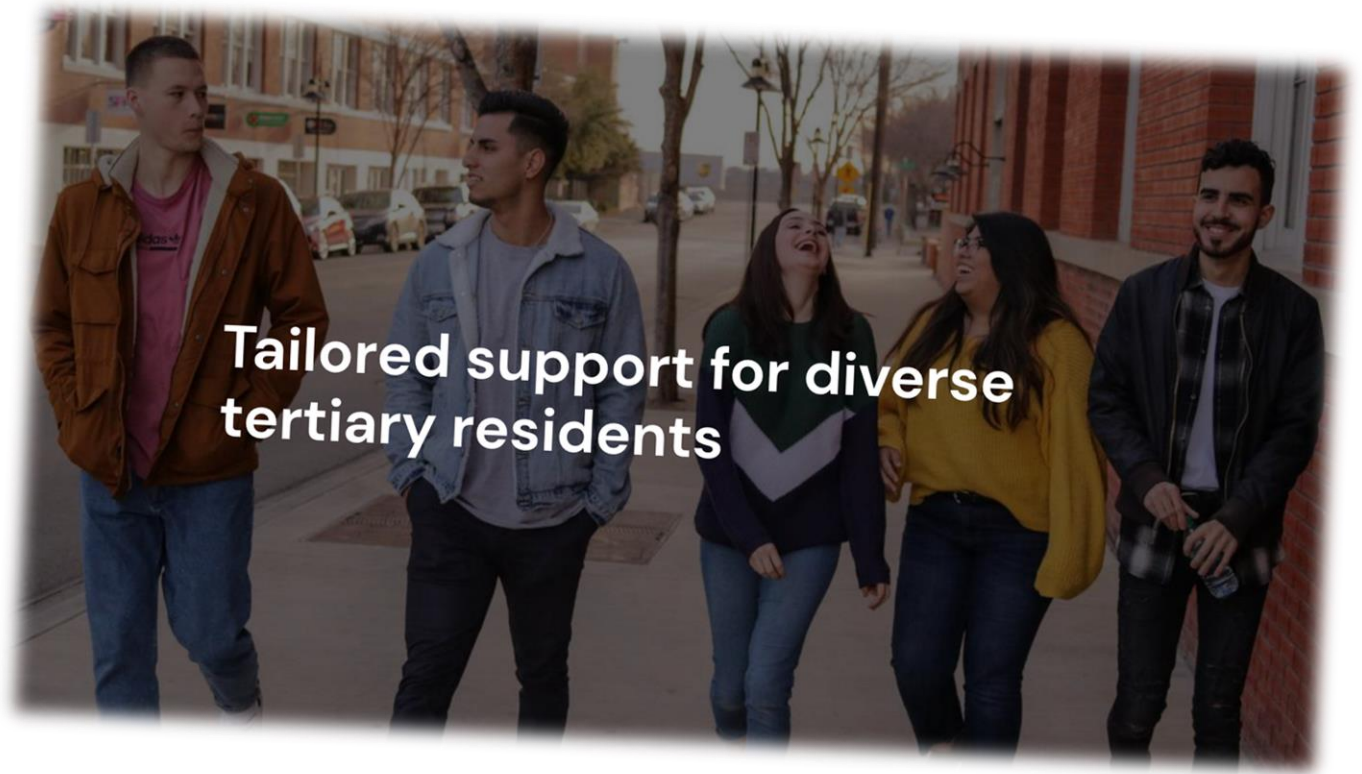


An eLearning microbyte will:

- assist you with tailoring your support for international learners
- help you consider cultural, religious and linguistic dynamics
- assist you learn through cases
- identify effective intercultural communication techniques

Manageable flexible learning for busy practitioners

eLearning micro modules offer interesting 15-minute learning chunks that encourage interactive learning that you can enjoy during commuting or during a quieter moment at work



Online micro modules

isana.nz>Toolkit

Resources



August 1, 2023

Supporting international learners' transitions

[Read resource](#)



August 1, 2023

Building soft skills for student success and employability

[Read resource](#)



August 1, 2023

Learning from critical incident case studies

[Read resource](#)



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Creating inclusive learning environments

[Read resource](#)



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Supporting mental health for international students

[Read resource](#)



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Getting the feedback you need to improve Services for international students

[Read resource](#)

Tailored support for diverse learners

Micro bytes offer a
variety of tasks:

Matching

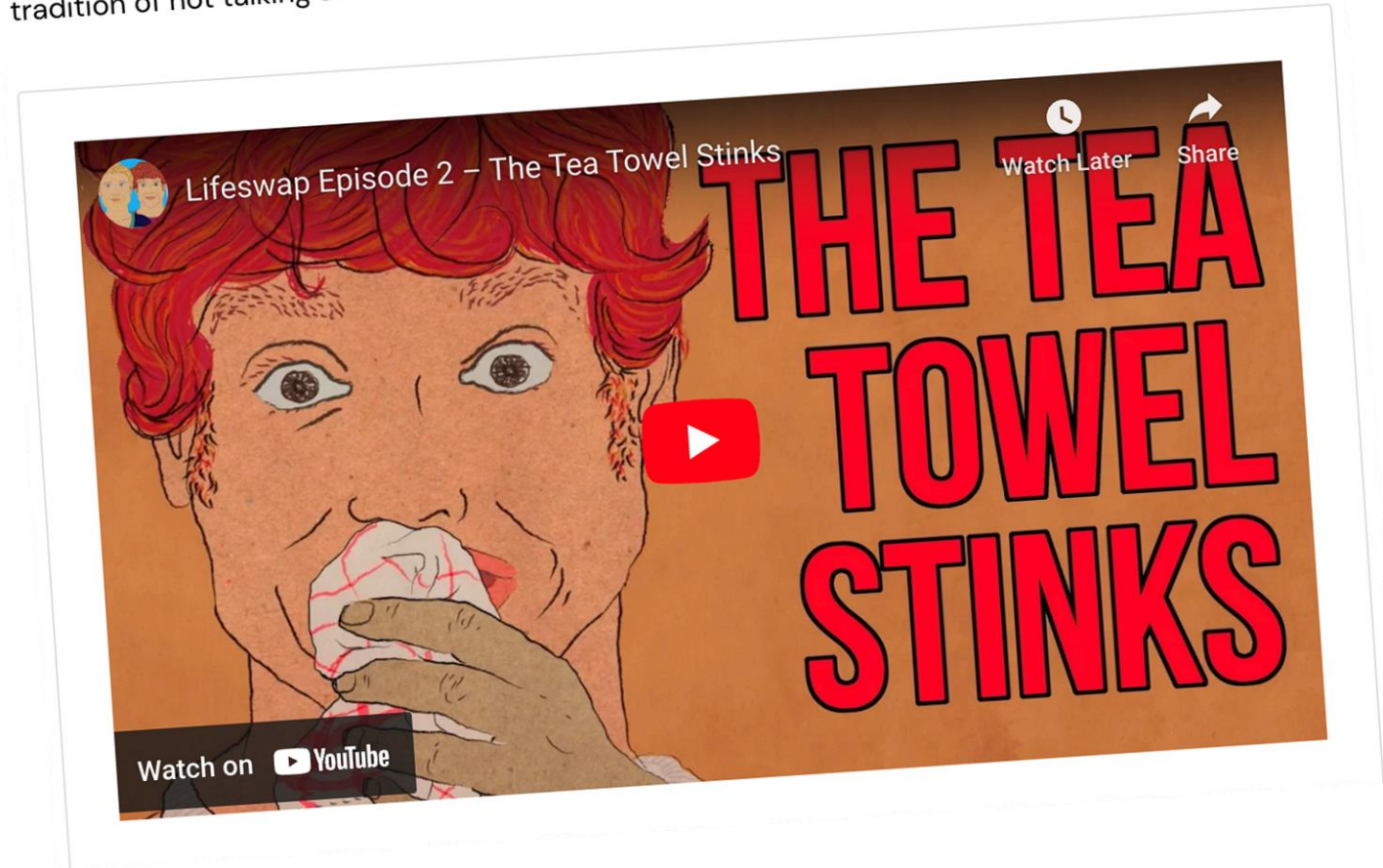
Multi-choice

Case-based learning

Select video clips

Check out the video series 'Lifeswap'

Learn about aspects of our culture that can surprise international visitors, for example, the 'proud' tradition of not talking about our problems



Good practice is captured and highlighted

Expertise leakage is prevented, i.e. choice bits from conference sessions and insights from master practitioners aren't lost or accidentally locked up

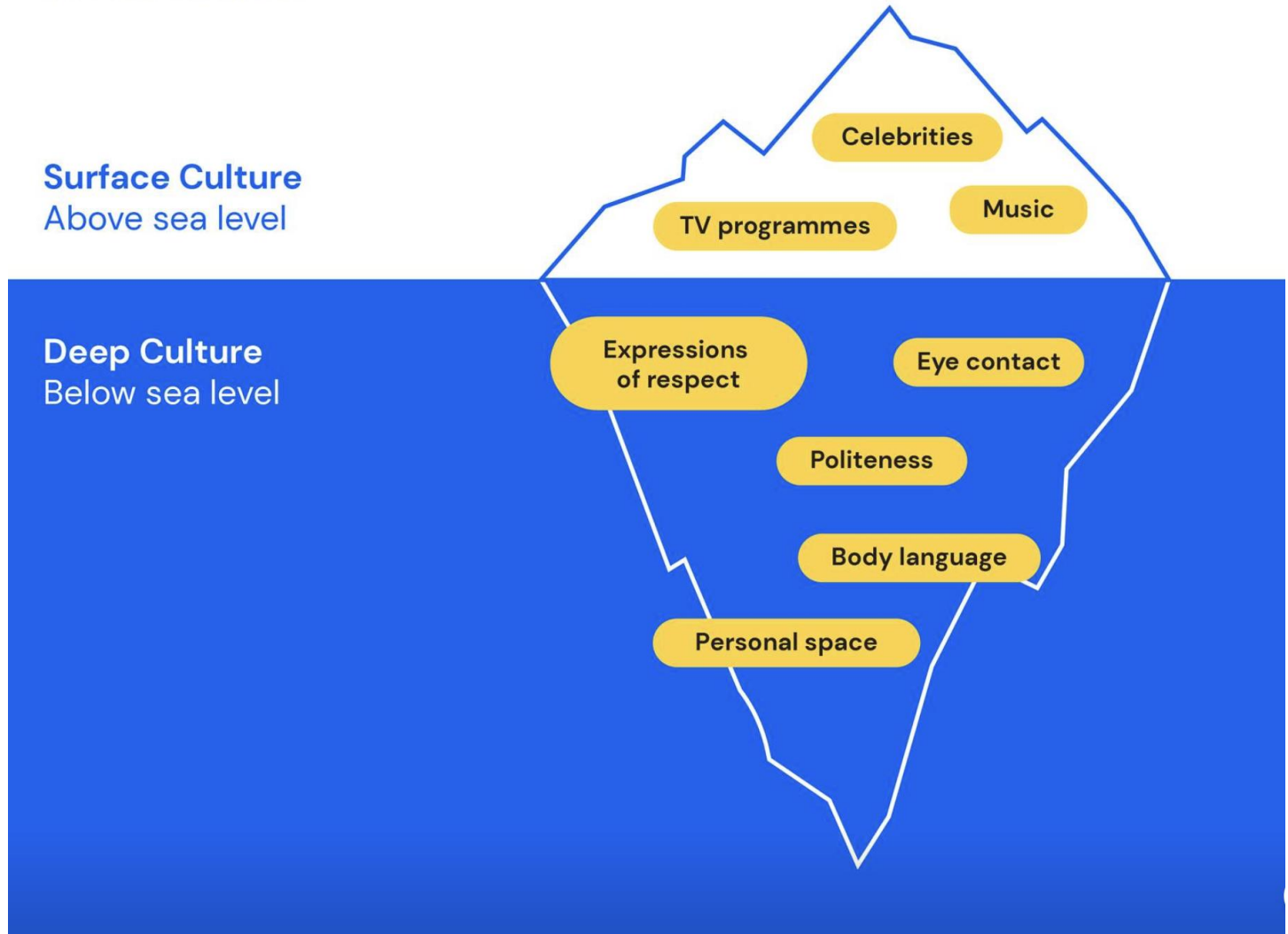
Attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed for intercultural competence

ATTITUDES	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS
Respect		
Curiosity		
Openness Suspending judgment		
Discovery Tolerating ambiguity and moving out of your comfort zone		

Micro modules promote key concepts

These concepts can be developed through modular learning and embedded in professional practice

The iceberg concept of culture



Testing definitions and new concepts

TESTING DEFINITIONS

Tailored support in international education is:

*the capacity to **clearly communicate with** and **engage empathetically** with diverse learners*

INTRODUCING NEW CONCEPTS

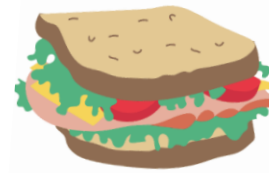
And what about adapting **Le Va** – the Samoan concept of the relational space between two individuals or groups – as a key concept? This assists us with zeroing in on the quality of our intercultural exchange and learning



Meet Tasmin

Tasmin is a hall manager. She is worried because she's just discovered that two cross-border residents think she favours some residents over others.

In this scenario, you are going to consider an example of cultural miscommunication in an accommodation setting.



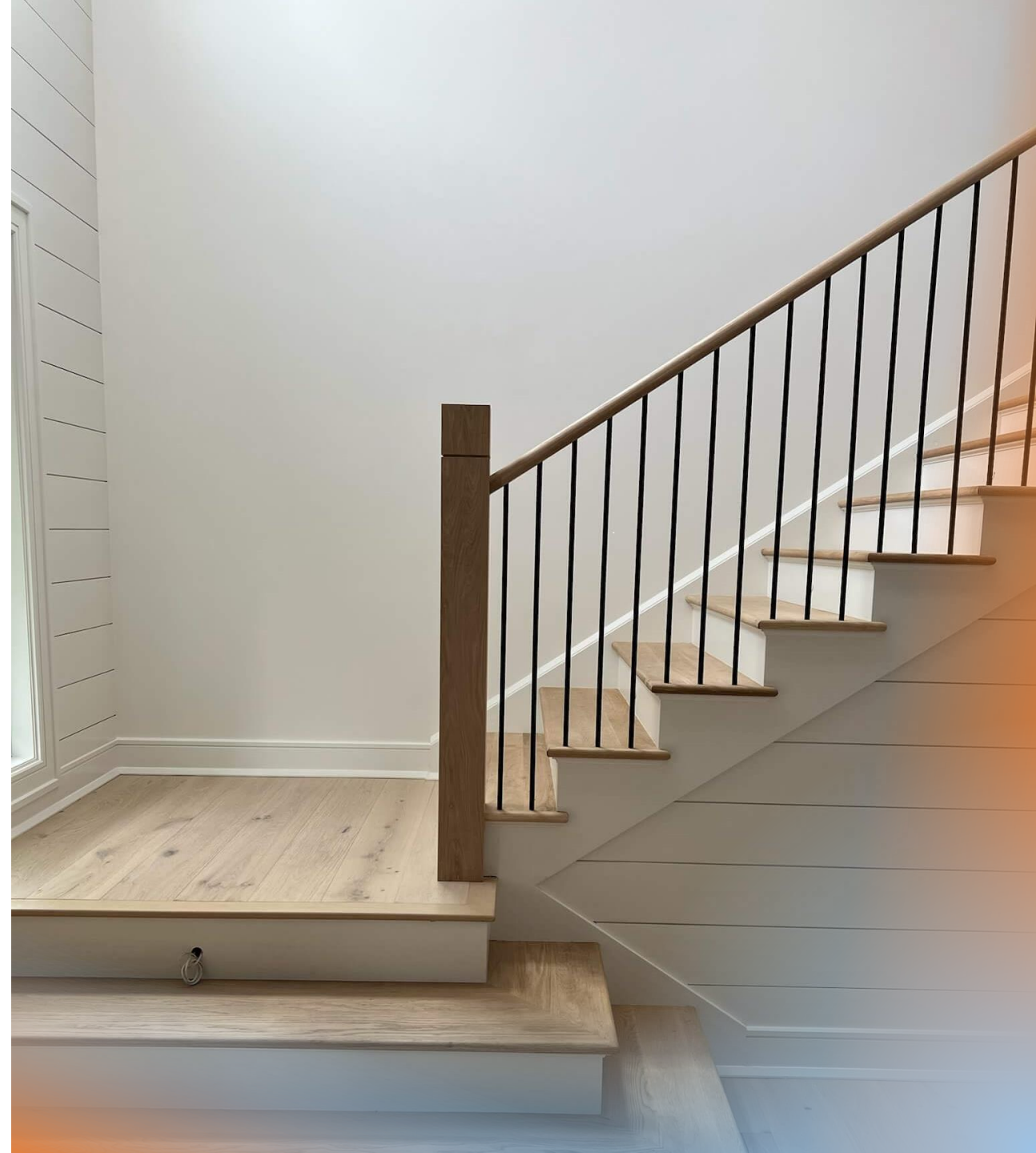
Common homestay scenarios

You are going to read about three scenarios that commonly occur in homestays.

Case-based learning becomes more accessible

Micro modules help to construct a credentials staircase

- Lower step - micro modules
- Mid step - university-delivered microcredentials
- Upper step - postgraduate courses



But ... disconnected steps

- Lower-level steps: ISANA NZ offers micro modules; ISANA Australia the National Code Tutorial; and IEAA the Credly modules
- Mid-tier step: There are no university-delivered microcredentials currently offered
- Top step: there are several postgraduate courses offered by an Australian university and a New Zealand university



Can we integrate these offerings into a credentials staircase?

Risks of status quo



Ad-hoc practice across the sector

Limited success in preventing exploitation

Unnecessarily high numbers of at-risk students

Expertise leakage

Limited knowledge of graduate trajectories

Reputational damage

“Dodgy” providers and agents “exploiting” students, claims Australia MP

but experienced providers have warned of the dangers of trying to make a “quick buck”.

Temporary migrant workers, including international students, are particularly vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace.

Regulation needed: Agents exploiting overseas students and making it rich, inquiry hears

Cheating students scam spells trouble for all universities

The return of nearly 40,000 international students to Queensland universities has stretched accommodation providers beyond capacity.

Auckland City Police issue warning: scam targeting international students in New Zealand

the emotions of migrant workers in insecure and unfree situations contribute to workplace exploitation in three key areas: inducement into exploitation, entrapment and the emotional maintenance of exploitation.

Poor English, few jobs: Are Australian universities using international students as 'cash cows'?

University students turn to ‘contract cheating’ amid housing crisis and lack of support



University of South Australia runs a number of activities, including Global IQ Connect and Working with students as partners, to promote international students' social connectedness with domestic students.



AN ONLINE GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



Intercultural Skills Program

National Code Tutorial

The National Code Tutorial (NCT) is an online training program for international education professionals in the international education sector.

Foodbank Victoria International Student Pop Up Shop

Confidence Hackers' Wellbeing Programs

Confidence Hackers programs empower students to make better wellbeing decisions for themselves, by normalising mental health, and helping them to understand their role in looking after their wellbeing.

ISANA NZ Student Ambassador Training

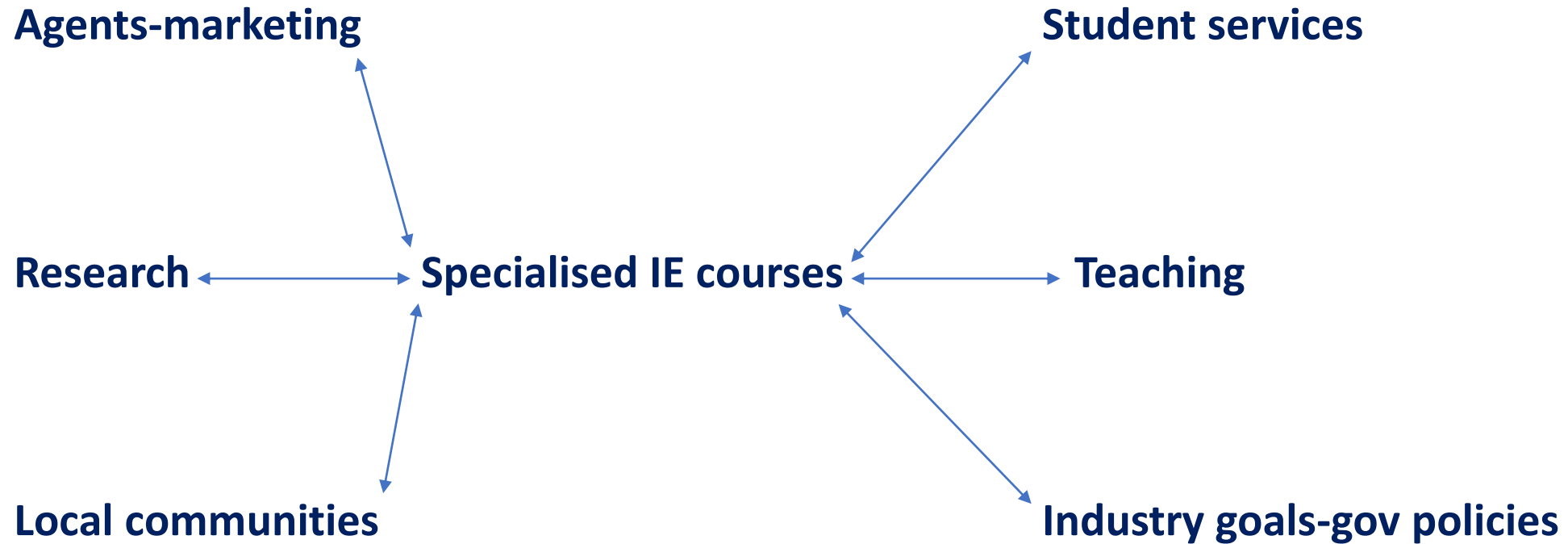
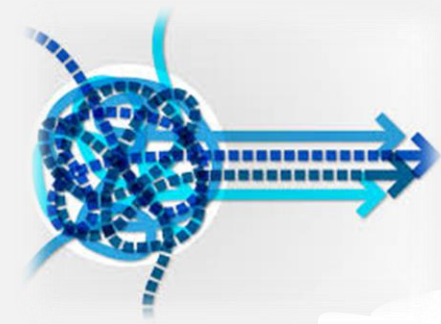
Promoting student leadership and global citizenship

Life as a Griffith Mate

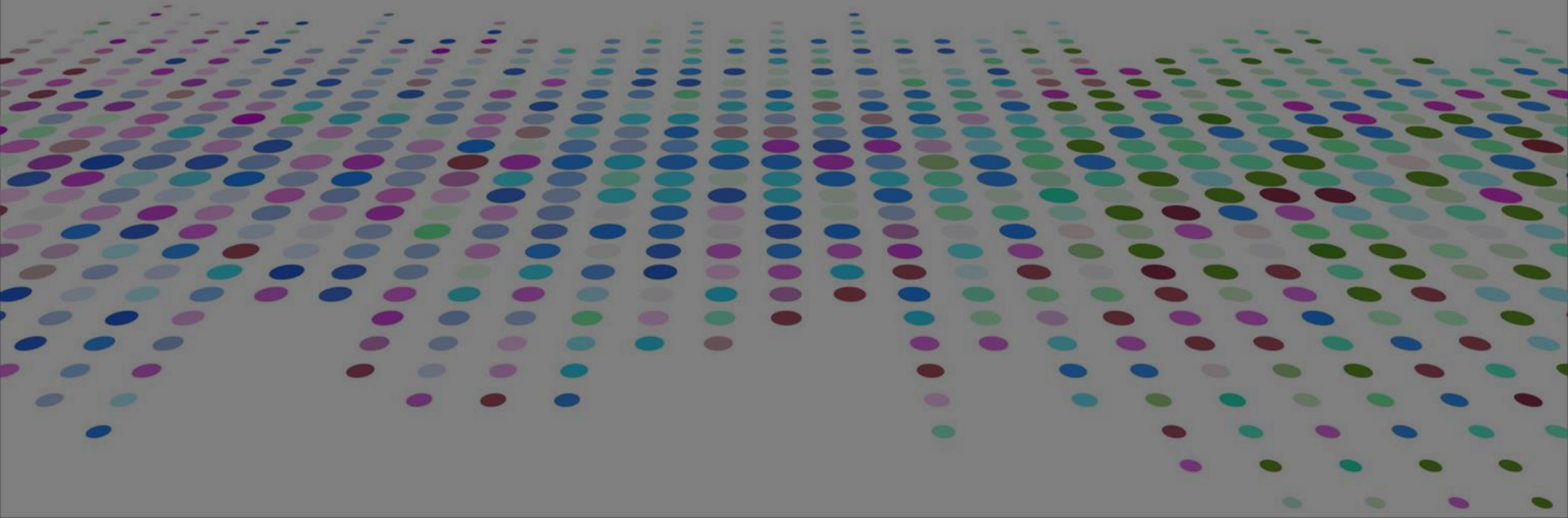
Best practice international student engagement

Education, Governance and Policy for Sustainable Societies

Integrating disparate parts



It is the practitioner who mediates the
international student experience:
Train the practitioner – enrich the student
experience



Calling for a specialist profession formed by sector-specific courses, professional pathways and dedicated research

PAIR QUESTION: Why hasn't it happened already in international education (which is after all a lead export sector)?

Call to muck in together: Whatever it takes

We're inviting an ISANA trans-Tasman effort to facilitate the funding, design and delivery of a range of micro modules & credentials for international education practitioners

This includes positively engaging captains of industry, state and federal government and embracing a cooperative cross-sector approach

Interested in participating in a working group? Contact:

Chris Beard chris.beard@isana.nz

Sharon Cook president@isana.org.au

