It is a pleasure to be involved in this project for a number of reasons. Firstly, an online program will offer international students an accessible, highly functional and interactive means to understand the experience of transition to overseas study. Student users will identify their own needs and capabilities as they work through the material. Secondly, while most universities develop their own orientation and support programs, this program provides an efficient and effective means to reach student cohorts. It offers participating universities common and widely accepted content developed by specialised professionals. It also offers a means to maintain a standardised product that incorporates a broad set of activities and resources for their students. In addition, the program supports the Australian legislative framework that requires education providers to “assist overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia and have appropriate orientation programs” (Standard 6, National Code 2018). Being part of the development team of this program by offering my experience and expertise is a rewarding and worthwhile undertaking.

I am involved in this project because I believe the more we can do for international students on arrival in Australia the better their experience will be. International students arrive at all different points in the year so I think having a resource that is practical and accessible at any time arrival is vital. I would like this program to be a friendly practical resource for students; something they can return to at different points when they need. I would also like this program to send a clear welcome message; something that says ‘we admire your drive in choosing to study in another country and want to do all we can to help you meet your goals’.

Dr Paula Durance
Lead Advisor

Dr Melissa Russell
Lead Advisor
Before I moved to Australia, I was told many (imaginary) tales of this country – that people keep kangaroos as pets, and Santa Claus arrives on a surf board. Although I soon learned that the image of Australia painted in other parts of the world isn’t necessarily accurate, I think it would have helped me to overcome the culture shock had I been more informed prior to my arrival. Being an international student comes with a whole unique set of challenges that only those who have experienced them first hand would fully be able to appreciate. The *International Student Success* course has been developed with the voices of real international students, who have been brave enough to try Vegemite sandwich and wondered the origins of fairy bread (I recommend Googling these if you haven’t heard of them before!) while battling homesickness and the pressures of living and studying on the other side of the planet from their family. I hope these modules – and our experiences – can help you as you start your life in Australia.

The *International Student Success* course reflects on the importance of communication for students coming to Australia. Yes we speak English, but it’s essential students understand the differences they will encounter due to our accent, cultural and societal influences and the delivery of academic instruction.

*International Student Success* is an engaging and fact-filled programme that fills a gap in the international student experience. Working their way through the units, either before their departure or on arrival, students find information about many different aspects of living and studying in Australia. It provides answers to queries they didn’t know they had, and also links to information and services that can make their experience of living and studying overseas more enriching and successful.
The International Student Success modules are an important support piece that shares student stories and celebrate our international experiences. Why? Because it honours the experiences of the 100,000+ international students in Australia with truth, it shares their stories with dignity and it celebrates the rich culture, insights and the joy we bring to this country when we share a part of our stories. Beyond that, the course is practical and understands the different things that could worry an international student. Its approach to engaging with staff who have been supporting students and to get a student-led perspective while creating it really allows students to think strategically about how to establish a supportive and reliable community for themselves in Australia.

From expanding your network worldwide to experiencing a new culture, studying abroad can be exciting and nerve racking on the same time. International Student Success empowers students to guide themselves effortlessly through the transition. Legitimate scenarios and practical solutions eliminate most of the stereotypes to prepare one mentally of what is ahead. I proudly believe that the program can fuel their ambition by creating a positive mindset and kickstart their journey as an international student.

The International Student Success pack is well designed to support students travelling from any part of the world to Australia. A quick sneak-peek on what life would look upon arrival is all you need to reduce the level of anxiety students have and increase enthusiasm before they start a new daring journey of embarking a beautiful life in Australia.

To find out more about International Student Success head to our website: www.epigeum.com/courses/studying/international-student-success