What Are Graduate Attributes?

Debate exists around an exact definition of however, a broad definition is: ‘the skills, knowledge and abilities of university graduates, beyond disciplinary knowledge, which are applicable to a range of contexts’ [1] and it is argued that:

“such attributes are what makes higher education distinct from other forms or ‘levels’ of learning.”

Aim

To identify the value of international student partnership on developing graduate attributes and preparedness for employability and professional & personal development.

Research Method

The students were invited to complete an online semi-structured qualitative questionnaire to provide feedback on how their travel experience impacted on the specific graduate attributes, their professional practice, employability and personal development. 6 students responded (60% response rate).

The responses were read and important moments or events described identified and coded. Thematic analysis was then used [2] to examine the themes emerging across the graduate attributes.

Results

Students developed several important skills necessary for professional and personal development

- Acquired the ability to apply knowledge and develop skills in new and changing environments
- Developed a wider and advanced range of communication techniques
- Adopted an enquiring mind and the ability to interrogate in order to problem solve
- Became more culturally aware and respectful of other cultures and individuals opinions and beliefs
- Experienced professional development and a positive attitude shift towards employability and international travel
- Increased in self-confidence and self-awareness
- Acquired organisation and planning skills
- Developed attributes and practical skills required to work as part of a successful team

[1] http://www.gla.ac.uk/students/attributes/yourattributes/