



Global **PAD** Research Tools

Sociocultural Adaptation

Helen Spencer-Oatey
& Xiong Zhaoning

Reference for this tool:
Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012) Sociocultural adaptation. *GlobalPAD Research Tools*. Available at
GlobalPAD Open House <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/globalpad/openhouse/reseachskills>

Sociocultural Adaptation

Research Tool

Purpose: to probe the sociocultural adaptation of international students studying at a UK university

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The research tool was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- to assess the extent to which students were experiencing sociocultural adjustment problems;
- to assess the importance that students attached to sociocultural adjustment;
- to identify which of the domain(s) 'university academic life', 'contact with people' and 'daily life', and which specific issues were perceived as (a) most/least difficult and (b) most/least important to adjust to;
- to explore whether demographic and other variables had an impact on the above measures.

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

As an international student, you might have encountered problems dealing with some situations since your arrival in Britain, due to unfamiliarity with the social, cultural and educational differences between your home country and Britain.

Please read through the list of situations below and show (a) how difficult you have found it to cope with them, and (b) how important it is for you to be able to cope with them successfully, by circling an appropriate number on either side of each situation.

Amount of Difficulty					Situation	Amount of Importance				
No Difficulty	Extreme Difficulty					Not at all Important	Extremely Important			
					Daily Life					
1	2	3	4	5	1. Getting used to the local climate	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	2. Getting used to the local food	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	3. Buying daily necessities	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	4. Adapting to the local accommodation (e.g. use of kitchen or sharing a house with others)	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	5. Travelling around by public transport	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6. Getting used to the pace of life in Coventry	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	7. Carrying on with your favourite leisure activities	1	2	3	4	5
					University Academic Life					
1	2	3	4	5	8. Asking teachers for help when you have problems with your study	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	9. Participating in the discussions in class	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	10. Expressing clearly your ideas in class	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	11. Understanding lectures	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	12. Taking notes of key points of lecture in class	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	13. Reading and understanding materials recommended by your tutors	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	14. Writing up papers that can earn you good grades	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	15. Understanding tutors' comments on your coursework or papers	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	16. Getting used to the teaching methods	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	17. Obtaining the books and journals you want in the university library	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	18. Using computers to do your coursework	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	19. Completing coursework on time	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	20. Getting used to being grouped with students of different nationalities	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	21. Talking about study issues with students of other nationalities after class	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	22. Understanding the assessment scheme of the university	1	2	3	4	5
					Contact with People					
1	2	3	4	5	23. Making friends with your own countrymen	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	24. Making friends with British people	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	25. Making friends with people of other nationalities apart from British	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	26. Taking part in local social events (e.g.	1	2	3	4	5

		pubs and holiday celebrations								
1	2	3	4 5	27. Getting used to living independently from your parents	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	28. Contacting your families or friends through email/telephone	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	29. Dealing with other nationalities who annoy you (e.g. those making noise in the library)	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	30. Dealing with staff working in the finance or accommodation office	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	31. Being with other nationalities of the opposite sex	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	32. Being introduced to new people of different nationalities	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	33. Starting a conversation with people of other nationalities and keeping it going	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	34. Understanding jokes and humour in English	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	35. Dealing with physical closeness and touching in social settings (e.g. kissing and hugging)	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	36. Getting used to making appointments with people before visiting them	1	2	3	4	5

For more information on the study, including the background and findings, please see the following reference:

Reference

Spencer-Oatey, H. & Xiong, Z. (2006) Chinese students' psychological and sociocultural adjustments to Britain: an empirical study. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 19 (1): 37–53.