

UQ Pharmacy breaks down language barriers

21 June 2013

The University of Queensland has started a program to help international pharmacy students understand Australian language and culture.



UQ School of Pharmacy Project team leader Jacqueline Bond said the program aimed to identify and address cultural and language barrier issues for non-native English speakers early in their studies.

" Australian colloquialisms are an example of issues faced by pharmacists," she said.

" Someone might tell a pharmacist they have a gut-ache, had a chunder, caught a wog, chucked a sickie, couldn't eat brekkie or got bitten by mozzies.

" These sayings can completely bamboozle student pharmacists from non-Australian backgrounds," Ms Bond said.

" It's vital that graduates have excellent communication skills when they enter the pharmacy profession, to ensure that medicines are used safely and effectively."

UQ's School of Pharmacy and academics in language learning and higher education have created the Skills for Communicating and Relating in Pharmacy Training (SCRIPT) program.

The SCRIPT team received a \$5000 Vice-Chancellor's Equity and Diversity Award for recognising the challenges facing culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Ms Bond said pharmacy students and graduates needed to have a high standard of discipline-specific and colloquial English to be successful in their studies and ultimately in their profession.

Historically, between 36 and 53 per cent of UQ pharmacy students have spoken a language other than English at home.

SCRIPT is the result of collaboration between pharmacy academics from the [UQ School of Pharmacy](#), specialist language teachers from the [Institute of Continuing and TESOL Education](#) (ICTE-UQ), and higher education experts from the [UQ Teaching and Educational Development Institute](#) (TEDI).

The program was established in 2008 to better prepare undergraduates for their experiential placements in pharmacies and oral communication assessments, which begin in their first year of study.

Video of the script program can be found [here](#).

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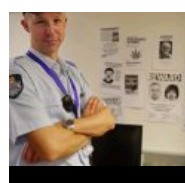
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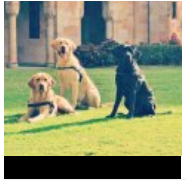


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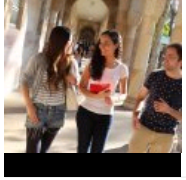
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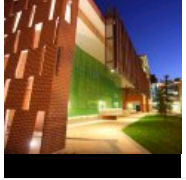


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