

Wei 0:00

So my name is Wei Mao, and I'm from China.

Academic Support 0:05

So what was it like preparing to leave when you were coming over? How did you feel?

Wei 0:12

To be honest with you, like at the first time, I thought it will be very excited experience ...like, everything will be fine. But actually, after I came here and settling down, I think is more difficult than I thought. Like culture shock, or the food you used to eat in my ...in your hometown. Also, I think the main point is the method, the student use here, like in our classroom. I think, in this point, I feel the most panic, because I can feel the huge difference between me and them, like in research, the subject, in the way we talk in the class, and the frequency that we asked question in our classroom. So I think this is the most difficult point to accept for me.

Academic Support 1:11

And what advice would you give to somebody?

Wei 1:13

I think it's like, before you come to the school, if you'd never have experiments like study abroad, I think it may be better to research more about how will it be like in London, how student will react in the classroom, or how they... which method they use to study, I think, for example, is like, as much as possible, talk with the foreigner in your country, and find opportunities to make friends with foreigner there and see what they will, how they would talk. And you may learn the method from them.

Academic Support 1:52

So what is the difference?

Wei 1:55

I think they're more open. And as for a Chinese student, I prefer the more gentle way to think all kinds of things, or more gentle way to talk through things, or reflect.. reflection. In my class, as you know, we work a lot with collaboration as a team. So I think I changed a lot, I think in team in a collaboration way. And not just to satisfy your own idea. But way to listen to others and also receive the ideas by others. Or give your own ideas, share with others, it is more like learn a spirit to communicating with others.

Academic Support 2:49

And does that take a skill? Do you have to learn that?

Academic Support 2:52

I think I learned that from experiment, like working progress with my teammate. Literary, if you mean like in paper, I don't think so.

Academic Support 3:04

Um, what's the advantage of that way of working and what's the disadvantage?

Wei 3:10

I think for me, working is a very big challenge. Because maybe I want to do something more artistic but not so practical. As you know, some of our classmates are from multi discipline, and maybe some are businessman, maybe some are project manager. So, the way they thought, comparing with me, is totally different. So me, as a designer, I'll go first in the designers thinking maybe also in a visual way, in the first place, but maybe they will go with how to make the whole things in a good flow, or how to make like budget or something else. So, I think, it is a very good things to accept another's thought and others perspect in the whole project, I think it is the ability to adapt, I think this is the most important thing. Because maybe the BA student will use to learn from their teachers, also the overseas student, especially Asian student, I think, as for my experience, because we usually given the text by teachers, and then we know how we can do next. So we feel very safe if we received that task, or assessment. But I strongly feel like in my MA programme, I don't receive tasks by any others, even the tutors do not, like, tell you what you're going to do. So it's like all the sound driving things. So you have... you better like adjust that what you gonna learn from the course, before you go, you choose this course. So and once you address that, you better know yourself, like how you can learn better, what kind of situation you will acting the best when you are learning. So for example, as myself, maybe I'm not the person who is very, okay, in a very highly stressful environment. So maybe I would choose my own way, like, I would give more time for myself to sit along and think along for a while in whole day, and write down what I should do and clear my mind.

Academic Support 5:50

So you do that now, or you would do that before?

Wei 5:54

I think.. I think it's now because before, maybe there are more people will tell you what you should do in the school. And now it isn't. So before we have so too relaxed, to do that, like write down, or push yourself, to arrange a time. But now like time will... I think time is becoming more cherish and more like a pressure here. Because as a foreigner student, we spend a lot of money, we spend a lot of time to prepare. So we're better to use the time more productive. So I think I will take or learn more new methods to arrange my time and arrange my study ability.

Academic Support 6:49

Well, so you said something really interesting, which is that you need to spend time thinking.

Wei 6:54

Yes, and especially I think like when I was in school, I feel like I'm very difficult to think very precisely, maybe because the environment in CSM is quite noisy. I don't know if others will, will think about in this way. But I, as an individual, I prefer to think like in my room, like very quiet. Or just open my own music and think about how's the day going, and my reflection about the day and how I react in the class or my social situation with my classmate. Always friends in here like that.

Academic Support 7:42

And you're talking about collaboration. Do you notice that people work differently?

Wei 7:47

Yeah, I think like, totally different. And I even can address it perfectly. Because for example, my last project is about British Museum. And we have six collaborator, and which is all from different discipline, which is from architecture, business, graphic design, and biologist. So, as for analysis, the last collaboration, I think maybe some people would prefer to use their language to communication. And some designer like graphic designer, they prefer to just put their visual thinking, like, maybe they will make some sketch, and put on table and discuss their idea with you. And architect, they may also like put some sketch of the constructor of the idea. So, that kind of more arrangement, then others. Yes,

Academic Support 8:56

What skills do you think you came with very definitely? And what skills have you learned or knowledge? or...? Yeah...

Wei 9:06

I think one of the skill, but I'm not sure this is a skill. But I think I am more patient in listen to my teammates' idea, I think. And I will ...maybe I will share my idea regarding to their ideas. So, I think I'm good at like building my ideas based on others idea, but not just like, take off their ideas by mine. Yes, I think this is maybe one of the Asian culture, like we are kind of humble. And we're happy to learn from others. And also, the way we talk is more gentle, I think.

Academic Support 10:00

Does it worry you the differences?

Wei 10:05

Yeah, I think in the last term, I was worried a little bit. Because I feel a little bit hard to collaborator with all kinds of different kinds of people, as I work with in my country. But I think the good thing is people here, they are direct to express their ideas. But also, it depends on people, right? So, in this case, I also adapt this strength that you can, and you should, express yourself, but not just about the project about the knowledge, but also your feeling in collaboration. Like you should express yourself when you feel like ...you don't feel right, or you feel depressed, or you feel anxiety, you should say it loud, or otherwise, your collaborators, they will not know and they can't feel your feeling, and they don't know which part was going wrong. So, in the beginning, I didn't know how to express very well. So there's also some misunderstanding happened. But I think if I adopt this, like, try to express yourself loudly next time, I think it would go better.

Academic Support 11:29

You've only been here just over five months, right? Yes.

Wei 11:33

Yes, it is. A lots happened. Yeah, lots happened then I thought. And to be honest, I thought it would be easier ...before I came here, but actually they're more like challenge than I thought.

Academic Support 11:49

And are you enjoying it?

Wei 11:51

Yes, I think so, like, yeah, it is very enjoyable.

Academic Support 11:56

So what are your plans for the remaining year and a half that you're here?

Wei 12:01

I think first I will keep absorbing the new method, both in study and social. It is not kind of things that I should throw away my old to communicate or thinking, but I would love to absorb the new changing like, I think I will try to be bold, bolder in the future. And also for living here, I think I will kind of try to working with more different discipline people in UK. Yeah, it is challenging, but also excited. Yes. Maybe the key thing is to maintain your enthusiasm, like to keep thinking about what's your purpose, and don't waste time. Keep thinking about your purpose to be in here. And always be open mind and be humble. And try to, as possible, as absorbing the new things and try to let the new or difficult or the different things in your life here to become your strength.

Academic Support 13:27

I think we could all learn from that, you know?

Wei 13:30

Yeah.

Academic Support 13:31

Thank you very much.

Wei 13:32

You're welcome