

# THE NEXT STEP

## GOING HOME

### How will that be?

**You finished your study, you go back home**

What do you feel?  
What stopped surprising you?  
What do you expect?

**You arrived in New Zealand**

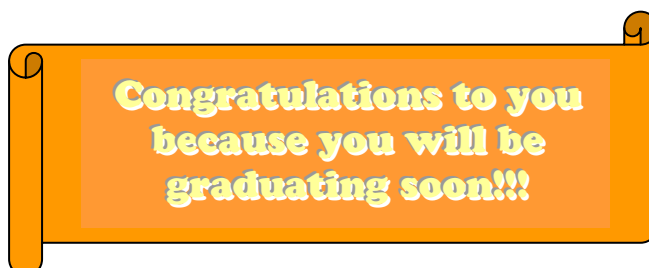
What did you feel?  
What surprised you?  
What did you expect?  
How old were you?  
Who was with you?

**You studied At Massey University**  
for how long?

**International Student Support Office**  
**Massey University**

## FAREWELL TO THOSE WHO ARE COMPLETING THEIR STUDIES AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY.

The end of semester is in sight, and you must now be preparing to pass the last exams of your studies.



One of the most exciting journeys of your life is about to finish and you need to start looking ahead, towards what will be happen after you have finished. You may want to stay in New Zealand and work for a while (you can apply for your Graduate Work Permit through the International Support Office); you may want to travel a little before going home; or you may be travelling back to your home country as soon as you finish your studies. Whatever the next step, there are few things you need to think through and organize. This guide book gives you very useful information about what you need to think about while preparing for the next step.

If you are going back home, before you leave you will need to say good bye to many friends, as well as organizing various details such as accommodation, power and telephone bills, what to pack and how to send the rest home, graduation, etc.

There are also other aspects of your return home to take into account, and these are the personal aspects. You may not realise it yet, but you have changed from this experience: you arrived in a different country, lived according to their rules, and settled into their culture....AND YOU SURVIVED!!! And there are things from this country and this culture that you have taken in and you have not realised it yet. These things will have you going through a "Reverse culture shock", even if you are going back home!! This booklet will give you some hints about preparing yourself for this shock, as well as some tools to survive it.

The International Student Support team has been pleased to help you in your journey through Massey University, and it has been a great pleasure

to meet you. We hope you are welcomed home with open arms, and that you and your family look at this next stage of your life as a great opportunity to view things from a different perspective, to learn from this experience.

# 1. BEING PRACTICAL

In this section we will help you put together all the things you need to do before you leave....and hope you don't forget anything!!!

## 1.1. ACCOMODATION

Anywhere you lived, if your accommodation rent did not include power and telephone, you probably have a power and telephone connection in your name. Please remember that in New Zealand, if you don't pay your bills your name will be recorded at Bay Corp (collection Agency) and it will chase you all around the world you may have trouble returning to the country if this happens.



**So:**

- Make sure you pay all outstanding bills
- Cancel the power and telephone connections and see how to pay any money owing.
- If you are sharing these in a flat with other students, make sure you pay all outstanding debts and maybe leave some money for calls that may have made after the last bill.

When renting the house/flat you live in, you received the place in certain conditions of cleanliness and order. You also signed a Tenancy Agreement which needs to be observed. So make sure you:

- Give the appropriate notice to your landlord that you will be leaving the house/flat on a defined date. Normal tenancy agreement state 4 weeks is the minimum notice to give your landlord.
- Clean the carpets and leave the place clean and empty
- Hand the keys to your landlord in orderly manner
- Make arrangement to get the bond refunded

You have lived in Palmerston North for a certain amount of time and during this time you may have bought stuff. The longer the stage, the more things you have bought, so make sure you give it enough time to sell, donate or give away all of these things.

Some good ways of getting rid of furniture and household appliances and house ware could be to:

- Organize a *Garage sale*: you can put a small add in the local paper (Manawatu Standard) and hang some notices in the notice board at Massey University letting people know about the garage sale.
- Organize a list of items for sale and publish in the Massey Ads section of the Massey University web page or advertise it through the Post-Grad club.
- Contact the local second hand shops to see if they would take your house appliances
- Donate everything or some stuff to the Salvation Army or other church of your choice or, donate it to Massey Furniture Bank (remember if you borrowed things from the Furniture bank, please return them to the Furniture Bank for other students to us)

## **1.2. CAR**

Cars are not easy to sell. Make sure your car is in good condition; this will make the sale easier. You can try and sell it through Massey Ads, Trade Me, within your international student community, etc.

Most importantly, make sure you allow sufficient time to sell the car, even if it means you may have to come to Massey in a bus for a short while.

You **MUST MAKE SURE** you have done the **CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP** of the car to the new owner **BEFORE** you leave New Zealand. Fines and securities are linked to the car owner, so if the new owner is a reckless driver and gets fined a lot, those fines will be under your name because the car is still yours. This may lead to a pile of debts with Transport New Zealand, when you are not even in the country.

If your car is insured, make sure you cancel the policy and tell the insurance company you are leaving the country

Make sure you pay any outstanding fines you may have got.

Remember to return any child seats or car content you may have borrowed from any person or institution.





### 1.3. **MASSEY UNIVERSITY**

There are some things you need to do at Massey University before you leave.

- Make sure you **change your contact details**: if you leave before getting your end results, the University will need to contact you to inform you about them.
- Make sure you **apply for graduation**, even if you are not going to be present for the official ceremony. Complete a "Request to Graduate" form from Reception at the Registry Building or fill in the online form. Here you will have to nominate if you wish to attend a graduation ceremony or graduate in Council.
- Make sure you **become a member of the Massey University Alumni Online Community**. If you are a Massey graduate you can be part of this Community, which stretches all around the world. You can find friends, keep in touch with classmates from everywhere in the world and meet new/old Massey Alumni. Check their link from the main Massey University web page: <https://alumnionline.massey.ac.nz>
- Make sure you have **returned all the books to the library**
- Make sure **paid all outstanding fees**: library fines, car park fines, medical centre visits as well as other fees you may have. If there are any fees outstanding, you will NOT be able to graduate or receive your final results.
- **Buy any merchandise you want from Massey University**: this is a great way to remember your time here. There is memorabilia of diverse kinds available for you to buy and take home. These also make very nice presents.
- While being a student here you have been insured. Remember your insurance covers you until 30 days after you have left New Zealand if you go directly back home. **Make sure you file all the claims** you have before you leave Massey University.

### 1.4. **MONEY**

- **Make sure you closed all your bank accounts in New Zealand before you go**. Tell the bank you are leaving. This helps any automatic payments to be stopped. Failing to do this may mean that automatic payments will continue coming to the bank and you will generate a large debt with the bank for being over drawn.



- Keep in mind that some countries have restrictions on the amount of cash you bring into the country, so make the necessary arrangements for the extra money to reach your accounts back home.
- If you don't want to carry cash, change the extra New Zealand dollars into traveller's cheques.
- Leave enough cash in your pockets for last minute expenses and travel costs such as airport taxes, excess baggage costs, maybe a night's accommodation and some for food.



### **1.5. STUDY MATERIAL AND BOOKS**

During your study here you must have piled some large amounts of printed material (papers, assignments, and published papers), books and notes. Make sure you go through everything and decide what will be useful for you when you go back home and what can be eliminated. This is a time consuming task, but it is better to do it before you leave so that you do not pay extra money (whether you will send it as unaccompanied baggage , freight or excess baggage) for material you will not use.

**Books:** buy and take with you any books you think may be of interest to you and may be hard to find back home (or will be more expensive). Sell books you don't want any more to any second hand shop, among your fellow degree students or publish them in the Massey Ads section.

**Associations, Scientific Societies and Publication memberships:** There are several of these that you may be interested in being part of and may not be easily reached from home. Make sure you pay the memberships and arrange for them to be sent to your new postal address back home.



### **1.6. PACKING**

Packing can become a nightmare if you don't plan for it. Over these years you must have accumulated a lot of clothes, accessories, mementos, presents and other stuff from your student life at Massey and from your social life in Palmerston North. If you have family with you, this is multiplied by the number of family members!!

So: What do you bring with you on the plane? What do you do with the rest of the things that won't fit in your luggage?

Here you have some tips:



Golden rule 1: Don't try to make everything fit in the suitcase....it won't fit!!!

Golden rule 2: If it can be easily and cheaply replaced back home, leave it here, sell it or donate it.

Remember that you are only allowed one piece of luggage of 20kg weight on domestic flights and on many international flights too. Any excess luggage or weight will be charged as excess baggage at the rate of NZ\$ 5/kg.

Make sure you include: most treasured personal items, your most needed articles or study material, small gifts and souvenirs for your family and friends back home and some clothes

So, what do you do with the rest?: Well, there are some alternative options to send all those other things you want to take home with you:

- Generally the cheapest way to send excess, unaccompanied baggage is by sea, through a freight company (check with the International Support staff on possible companies).

- It takes around 3 months to receive the baggage in your home country.
- There are several available in Palmerston North in the Yellow Pages. These companies have different degrees of experience with different countries, so it may pay to ask for quotes in more than one and check with someone from your own country or neighbouring country if they have any experience with any of the available companies.
- Make sure you know exactly what is included in the quotes (export and international taxes, freight costs, pick up and delivery costs, storage costs, documentation fees, home country handling fees, duties, taxes, sale taxes, GST, VAT and any other possible cost). **Ask for the TOTAL cost.**

- Air Freight: this is another alternative, which takes normally less time but is more expensive.

- Normal post: New Zealand post can handle overseas postage of boxes.

- Sometimes airlines allow you to check extra luggage at a certain cost. Call your airline and find out if this is possible and how much it would cost per extra piece.

Any of these options that you chose: check the customs laws from your own country and make sure you declare and pay all the necessary duty





taxes. If you fail to do so, you may not be able to recover your belonging even if they are in your country.

Also remember to make a list and take pictures of all the items you will send as unaccompanied baggage. This way, if you have taken insurance, you can claim things that may be missing.

### **1.7. TRAVEL**

The earlier you make your travel arrangements, the cheaper the rates you can get. So, make your travel arrangement early rather than late.

Keep some cash for any unexpected expenses you may have during your trip.

Make sure you tell your friends and family at home when you arrive. And make arrangements to be picked up at the airport whenever possible.



## **The practical checklist**

### **Accommodation**

- Leave the place empty and clean
- Give enough notice to my landlord I am leaving
- Pay outstanding Power bills and arranged for the services to be disconnected (or leave enough money with a trusted person to pay on your behalf if you are sharing)
- Pay outstanding telephone bills and arranged for the service to be disconnected (or leaved enough money with a trusted person to pay on your behalf if you are sharing)
- Hand in keys back to the landlord
- Arrange for the bond to be refunded

### **Car**

- I sold it
- I have made the change of ownership
- I have paid any outstanding fines
- I have cancelled insurance

### **Massey University**

- I have changed my contact details at the International Student Support office
- I have applied for graduation
- I have registered with the Massey University Alumni Society
- I have returned all books to the library
- I have paid any outstanding fine/fee to University
- I have bought the merchandise I wanted
- I have filed all claims to the insurance company

### **Money**

- I have closed my bank accounts in New Zealand and told the bank I was leaving the country
- I have bought traveller cheques if needed
- I have enough cash on me for my journey home.

### **Study Material and Books**

- I have sold/donated the books I don't want any more
- I have become a member of the professional societies and scientific publications I want

### **Packing**

- I have packed: my most beloved things, Photos and souvenirs, Books/papers I will need, Gifts for friends and family.
- I have sent all unaccompanied baggage and made arrangements for payment and reception



## 2. Re-entry: How does it work?



Many of you have been here for a very long time, 4, 5 years maybe. You lived in New Zealand through your "teenage" years, and you are going home a full grown young adult.

Some have come for a shorter period, maybe 2-3 years, for a Masters or a Postgraduate degree. You came here either alone, or with your wife/husband. You learned how to live as a couple in New Zealand, you may even have had your first child while living in New Zealand.

If you came on your own, you may have a girlfriend/boyfriend now. He/she may be waiting for you to come back home.

Whatever your situation, one thing is sure: you arrived in New Zealand, a different country, a different language, a different culture, where students come to University wearing jandals and go the supermarket in the evening in their pyjamas!!!! You settled in and you made it!!! You succeeded in your studies and finished this great experience, so for this:



Now comes the time of going back home, to that place that we know so well, where we grew up, and where our family and long non-seen friends live....but is it?

There are certain similarities between the process of settling in the new country and the process of settling back in you home country. This process is called "Reverse Culture Shock" and it works exactly the same as the culture shock you had when you first arrived in New Zealand.

You may not see it now but you have changed by living in New Zealand for the number of months/years that you have. Not only this, you have also been part of a very internationalized community at Massey University.

You have probably met, or seen people from Western as well Eastern cultures, dressed in their traditional clothes, performing some of their traditional customs, such as Ramadan, Christmas, Easter, St Patrick's day, etc. You probably heard or have been part of the Chinese New Year celebration, or the Independence celebration from Thailand, or Papua New Guinea. You have studied with people from countries you have never imagined you would have contact with....and each of these people have left something inside you, a new knowledge, a new teaching, a new experience, a new taste.

There are things from this experience that have got stuck into you, and most of these things you will finally realise when you get back home. But it pays to prepare yourself and your family for this next step.

Some of the areas where you may have experienced change could be:

### **2.1. Cultural adjustment:**



- You may have changed your lifestyle to suit the New Zealand time (eating dinner as early as 6 pm, wake up early during the weekend to attend your children's sport commitments, play sport you would not be able to play back home). You will need to re-adjust your routines to your home country style once you go back.
- You had no pressure to perform here but your own. There were no social or larger family pressures to conform. When you go back, remember that your family and friends may have expectation about you, they may want you to provide for them economically, they may want you to get a great job, they may have made all these assumptions about you and your new academic status. Think about these things and prepare yourself to work through these issues.
- Male/Female roles may have changed during your time in New Zealand. Maybe you had to do things here that only women or men would do back home (physical work, take care of the children, taking care of the house chores). This has made you stronger but it may also seem really strange to the people back home. Be prepared to receive comments and questions about this when you start your life back home.

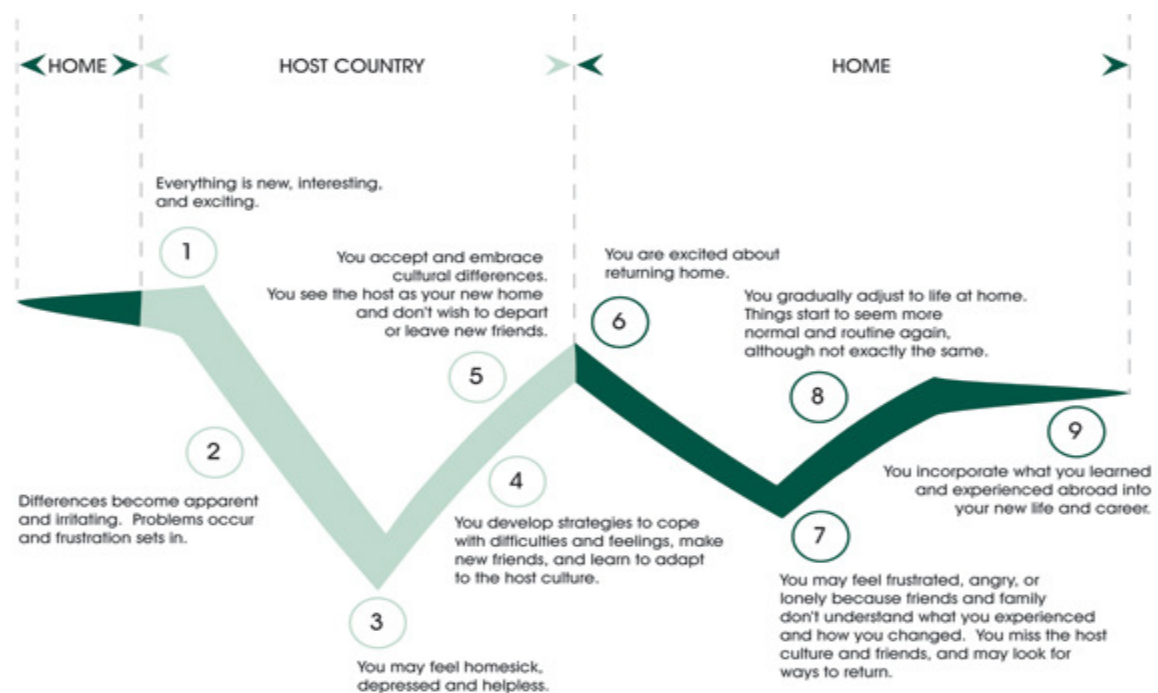


## 2.2. *Language, Education, Social/Political adjustments:*

- There are some words of the English language that have no translation into our mother tongues but that fit certain situations perfectly. You will find yourself using them without even noticing, or struggling to translate them into your own language. This will be funny for you, but may also be a bit frustrating to your country people. They may think "How could he/she forget his/her own language?". This is not something to panic about, but just be aware that this can happen and be prepared to react in a positive way to your family or friends comments.
- The same could happen in your place of work, with your colleagues. You may have been able to have access to technology which is not available in your country, and you have learned a whole new vocabulary around it. Your colleagues may feel challenged by this, because they did not have this opportunity and they may not know what you are talking about. Be prepared to share this information and allow you colleagues to ask as many questions as they need.
- Be also prepared for people who will not want to hear about your experience. This is just a defence mechanism some people put in place to defend themselves from change. In this case the Change is you. This may happen for many reasons:
  - They may not have agreed with your trip in the first instance
  - They may feel "less" than you because they did not have this experience
  - They may just feel that you have changed and they don't understand, they want the "old you"
  - They may feel that you think you are "better" than them because of your international experience.
- You may also realize that there is whole new slang that has developed in your absence. Maybe something happened socially or politically in your country and you were not there when it happened. This event may have triggered a whole new way of communicating with each other. Allow yourself some time to adjust to this, and ask as many questions as you need to understand this change.
- Maybe the people that were in strategic positions (politics/at work) when you left your country are not there any more; and so the rest of your colleagues have had time to adjust to this changes, but they are new for you. Allow yourself time to understand what happened, ask questions and certainly do not express judgments or opinions until you have all the facts.

- Maybe a very important member of your family passed away, so another member of the family stepped up into this important position. Maybe there are new-borns, separation, and arguments that happened during your absence that have changed the whole dynamic of your family. Allow yourself time to understand this and see where you fit into these new dynamics.
- Maybe there was major change in the politic picture of your country while you were away. You may feel you don't understand how things work any more.
- A very important aspect of this experience is that you have assimilated certain habits, such as "being punctual", shaking hands instead of hugging and kissing, you got used to people standing at a certain distance from you (respecting the personal space). You may feel frustrated when you go back home because people are late, or they may feel you are being cold with them because you don't hug them any more. All these day to day small experiences can be overwhelming at a certain point. Make sure that when you are feeling sad and lost, because you don't understand what is happening around you, you keep calm. Allow yourself to feel the frustration and then try to understand that this is just another change you went through and that there is something you will have to work through.

For you to have an idea of the "culture shock" you went through when you arrived in New Zealand and the "reverse culture shock" you will go through when you go back home, check this figure below.



From: [http://www.issm.umn.edu/reentry/culture\\_shock\\_b.jpg](http://www.issm.umn.edu/reentry/culture_shock_b.jpg)



Everything will be great just after landing back home!!!

The family and your friends will want to see you, they will ask you how your experience was, they will want to know it all!!!!

The first couple of days all the excitement will be there, you will catch up with colleagues, friends, there will be food and beverage and a lot of laughter and love. Everyone will be thrilled to have you and your family back.

After these first couple of days, when the novelty of your arrival is not there any more, when you have to start thinking about the next step, this is where you can start noticing that things just don't work the way you thought or remembered they worked. You may not have the nice house anymore, or you may be living with some other family members until your house is sorted, you may not be able to practice the sport that you want because the weather is different, your children may start complaining because they don't understand that they are not in New Zealand anymore. This is the time when this material may become helpful. When you start feeling down or under pressure or you want to say something that you know can hurt others, remember: **THIS TOO WILL PASS**

Even if you think this will not happen to you, just keep this material on hand...you may find you end up needing it!!!

### **2.3.     *How to prepare for this?***



There are exercises you can make before you go, which will allow you to see how you have changed and what could be some of the challenges you may face when back home. Make sure you do them with your partner and children if you have them, this will help the whole family to realise what you have changed, how you have changed and how people back home may react to this.

In this section, we would like you to think about yourself when you first got to New Zealand.

Write down your first impression, what surprised you about New Zealand, what amused you? What shocked you?

How were you physically? Fitter, slimmer, plumper? Did you have the same hair colour?,

Did you dress the same as now?

What were the things you believed were wrong in New Zealand?

What did you have to do here that you would never have done back home?



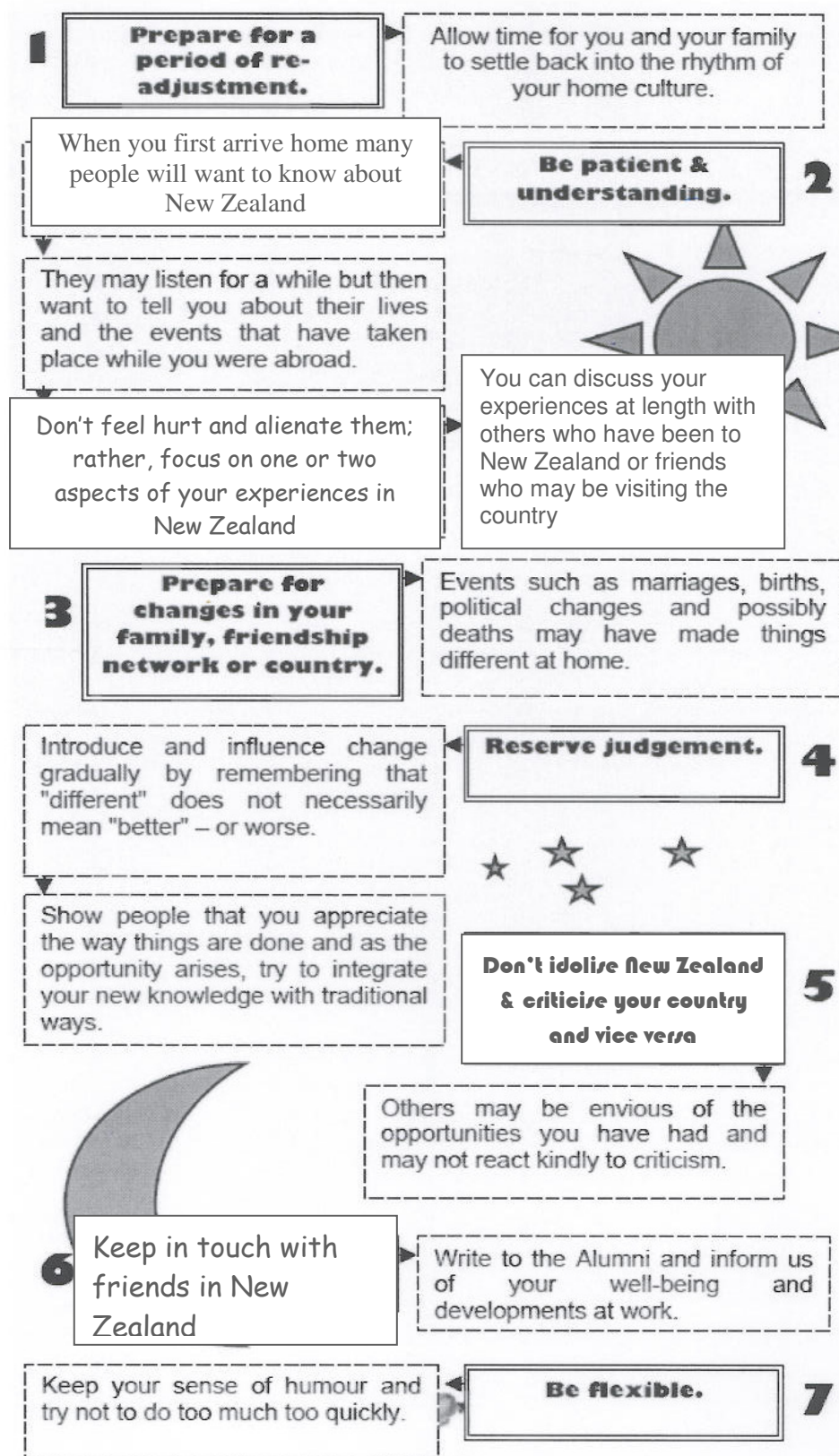
What did you think when you first arrived on Campus? How did you feel?  
Do you remember your first lecture? Did you understand it? Did you wonder if you would be able to cope? How was your first exam?  
Remember the first person you talked to at university? Who was he/she? Are they still there?  
Who and how was the government in your home country when you left? Who and how is it now?  
What was your job when you left? What do you think it will be when you go back?  
Who did you use to work with? Who is there now?  
How was your family constituted when you came to New Zealand? How is it now? Are there new children? Has someone passed away? How did your family adapt to the loss? How do you think you will?

Think about all these things. Integrate your family in this process, make them think about these things, and write everything down.  
This exercise will help you be aware of some the areas of change and how you can manage them.

Also remember that Massey University has a Counselling service available for students and their families. Please use this service, they have plenty of experience in preparing you to go back home.  
Please check their section on the main Massey University web page or follow this link:  
[http://cms.massey.ac.nz/massey/study/services-for-students/health/resources/resources\\_home.cfm](http://cms.massey.ac.nz/massey/study/services-for-students/health/resources/resources_home.cfm)



# What Can You Do to Prepare?



## 2.4. *Say your good byes*



You probably have met a lot of people during your time here. Some of them you will be able to see when their turn to return back home arrives. Others will stay here and you may never see them again.

Saying good bye is painful sometimes, but it also is necessary to allow you to close this chapter of your life.

Write a list of the people you would like to say good bye to and make sure you do.

## 2.5. *Prepare for your job re-entry at home*

Some of you will go back to your jobs and some of you will have to go through the process of applying for new jobs.

Make sure you:

- Request a reference letter from your supervisor or lecturer. They know you well and will be able to recommend you to others.
- Ask your supervisor or a lecturer you get along with well, if you can put their names forward as a reference in your CV. Make sure you have their correct contact details.
- Study the job market back home before you leave. Things may have changed in your field of expertise back home. Make sure you find out what has changed before you leave. This way you may prepare yourself (by collecting material or finding out information) for what will be expected of you when applying for a job back home.
- Up-date your CV with your latest acquired degree from Massey University.

If you need assistance with this area, please go to the careers section of Massey University web page. It is on the home page, on the right hand side of the screen. Otherwise, please follow this link:

[http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/students/careers/careers\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/students/careers/careers_home.cfm)



### 3. OUR FINAL MESSAGE

You are arriving to the end of a fantastic experience, one that will stay with you for ever, and a great tale to tell your grand children when they come.

You arrived in New Zealand, settled in and made it through Massey University, and you **WERE SUCCESSFUL!!**

For all these achievements, the International Student Support team would like to congratulate you: **WELL DONE!!!!**

Remember to remember us, and remember that we can assist you even if you are not in New Zealand any more. Just let us know how you are doing and if you need anything from us (our e-mail: [pniss@massey.ac.nz](mailto:pniss@massey.ac.nz) )

From the International Student Support team a big **THANK YOU** for choosing Massey University for your overseas studies.

It was a pleasure to have you with us.

We hope we have assisted you with your needs and we would love to stay in touch with you and your family.

Remember you are part of our International Family for ever.

Have the best of returns back home and we wish you all the best in this new stage of your life.



**Kakite Ano**

**Massey University  
International Student Support Office.**