

Global Competency Program - Student Feedback (June 2021)

The following students participated in a four-week AFS Global Competency Certificate online program with a group of high school students in India in June 2021, at the height of the covid-19 pandemic. The program included 4 interactive sessions facilitated by Massey University and a number of modules with a forum discussion component.



The following are the top 3 takeaways from the kiwi students...

Malindi

1. To always practise and use empathy and curiosity, in everything that you do, as it will put you in a great position to meet new people, as well as to put yourself in a positive mood.
2. To always treat everyone equally and to think before you speak, as things you might find funny, might not be funny for others and it could be disrespectful and hurtful.
3. To take it slow when in conflict with someone and to think about their conflict style and how we can come to a mutual understanding where both parties are happy.

Jaluka

1. My favourite thing from GCC has to be going into the breakout rooms and just talking with everyone, wherever it was about the topic at hand, or something else entirely
2. I've loved talking with everyone from India and learning about their culture, I've even learnt some stuff about New Zealand that I'd never really thought about and we've had a lot of laughs along the way
3. Our facilitator, Danial was awesome, he kept the conversations going and was really interesting to talk to, he also had some great ideas about weird New Zealand things like chocolate fish

Jack

1. How important it is to avoid using stereotypes, and how to differentiate between them and generalizations before making possibly offensive comments.
2. Active listening is more effective than listening to respond and should be used in everyday life.
3. Despite being so far displaced from one another, Indian and NZ viewpoints have lots of common ground, proving that everyone can relate to outside cultures if they keep an open mind.

Rebecca

1. I have learnt about thinking situations through and looking from both points of view before coming to judgements and assumptions about cultures
2. I also have learnt about how culture isn't always what you see but there are unseen factors and I really like the iceberg analogy for this
3. And lastly, I have learnt so much about Indian culture and have made some cool friends who I hope to stay in touch with

Ella

1. Meeting such interesting and insightful people from New Zealand and India, having the chance to talk to and discuss things with these people has been a wonderful experience.
2. Learning about how to approach different situations with a different mindset and compassion.
3. Learning about Indian culture and the underlying values and beliefs that come through in their everyday life, also talking to people who are still in lockdown made me realise how lucky we are here in NZ.

Sophie

1. I've learnt about the importance of listening to people's perspective and keeping an open mind when it comes to situations.
2. I learnt what a micro aggression is and the importance of paying attention to what you say and how you say it to be mindful of how others will receive it.
3. And most importantly, the beautiful values of each other's cultures.

Grace

1. Active Listening, shows people that you have curiosity and empathy for what they are saying, this gives the person a sense that you respect them and their opinions, even if your morals or opinions do not align with theirs.
2. Learning to understand other people and their views, even if you may not agree with them and a cultural difference may be one of the reasons for this.
3. Learning to make sure you think before you speak. Although this is a very common phrase that people (usually children) hear a lot it is true. Everyone has been brought up differently, this means that there will be moral differences sometimes even through siblings, this means that you need to watch what you say as some things that you may find a joke other people may find this quite hurtful.

Ellie

1. There is more to a person, culture, religion, or country than meets the eye.
2. People have different ways of communicating; it doesn't mean they don't share the same values.
3. Connecting with people all over the world and discussing current issues and learning more about being Globally Competent is a way to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Harrison

1. I learnt more about myself and how I can improve myself
2. I learnt more about my own culture and about other cultures
3. I learnt how to interact with new and different people

Hannah

1. Understanding different conflict styles and how to deal with a conflict easily
2. Dealing with microaggressions
3. Understanding the impact of a global citizen

Rosie

1. I have learnt to no longer judge someone before I put myself in their shoes and really think about the situation.
2. I have learnt about the different ways to deal with conflict and did not realise how some people prefer to deal with situations directly or indirectly, or with or without emotions.
3. I have learnt a lot more about myself and how to approach meeting someone who comes from a different background compared to me.

Anais

1. Active listening.
2. Learning and expanding my knowledge about stereotypes and generalisations.
3. Putting new skills into practice in the zoom calls and being able to put a name to communication and listening styles.

Zoe

1. I learnt that I enjoy talking to people from other cultures.
2. I learnt that there are many less obvious aspects of different cultures that are still important.
3. I learnt that there are many different ways to categorize cultures and people that will help with communicating with them.

Natalya

1. Communication and conflict styles. As a reader, writer, and performer, communication is very important to me.
2. How to connect well with people from other cultures. I think every module has contributed to this.
3. How to recognise stereotypes, generalisations, and microaggressions in everyday life. By acknowledging them, I can teach others to notice them as well, which should work towards a better future.