

UniMentor @ UWA

A UniMentor is an experienced student who helps new students navigate the everyday challenges of university

- Offer support and encouragement
- Maintain regular contact with new students
- Provide guidance and information specific to a student's faculty
- Refer students to relevant supports and services as necessary
- introduce you to other students by organising regular group catchups
- Make initial contact with new students via email and WeChat before students leave their home country
- Guide new students around Perth



ConnectMe@UWA: engagement pre-departure

ConnectMe links international undergraduate and postgraduate students pre-departure:

- All International students are assigned a mentor via email up to 3 months before they start at UWA.
- They remain linked to a mentor post-arrival for at least 6 weeks – until end 1st year
- Opportunities to participate in social activities
- provides immediate engagement with the mentors, their networks (both local and international) and the extended university community.
- Early contact allows preparation for arrival, while ongoing contact throughout the semester allows students to continue to benefit from their mentor's knowledge and experience.



Benefits of the program for international students

- The ConnectMe@UWA program can be replicated for various student cohorts as a way of facilitating early contact between the institution and new students.
- Students who have participated in ConnectMe are better prepared for their arrival on campus and have a better understanding of what to expect when they arrive.
- New students have realistic expectations as they have information first hand from students who are studying the same/similar course
- They are introduced to life on campus from a student perspective



Benefits of the program for mentors

- The program provides invaluable insight into working and communicating with students from different cultures.
- Mentors participate in cultural training to assist them in supporting international students and improve their understanding of the challenges that this cohort may experience
- The development of UWA graduates as global citizens who are culturally aware, capable of respecting diversity and acting in social/just responsible ways.
- The program not only promotes the development of skills and knowledge in global competence but represents a change of disposition or way of thinking or behaving.



Since the award in 2016

- Merging UniMentor and ConnectMe cohorts
- Continued increase in number of international students participating in the program and becoming mentors themselves
- Overnight trips to Southwest allowing better engagement between domestic & international students – neutral environment
- Input from international students into the training of mentors and ways to engage the cohorts
- Employment opportunities for international students from experience as a mentor on and off campus
- Expansion of program to postgraduate research students



Future plans

- Development of student focus groups to assist in the program direction
- Opportunities for current international mentors to contribute to the training of new mentors
- Expansion of engagement and social activities across all student cohorts
- More enhanced resources to support mentors
- Increased employment opportunities for international students from experience as a mentor on and off campus
- Broadening of program to our 2nd year international students

