

A holistic approach to enhancing students' academic writing.

Cindy Wee & Ruth Laing





Introduction

Every student is unique and comes from a diverse background and each has different learning needs and may have multiple issues. As learning advisors, when a student seeks help in their academic writing, we approach each student holistically.

Whole person

Educating the whole person requires understanding individuals (Jacobs & Alcock, 2019) and treating each student as an unique individual (Ghenghesh, 2018).



Strategies to provide holistic approach to academic writing





**Develop positive
relationships**

Successful positive and caring relationships transpire when students feel that their academic advisor genuinely cares for them and for their success (Braine & Parnell, 2011)



Building relationships

See the student as a person first

Share relevant life experiences to build trust

Once there is a relationship - students appreciate our genuine interest in their success.



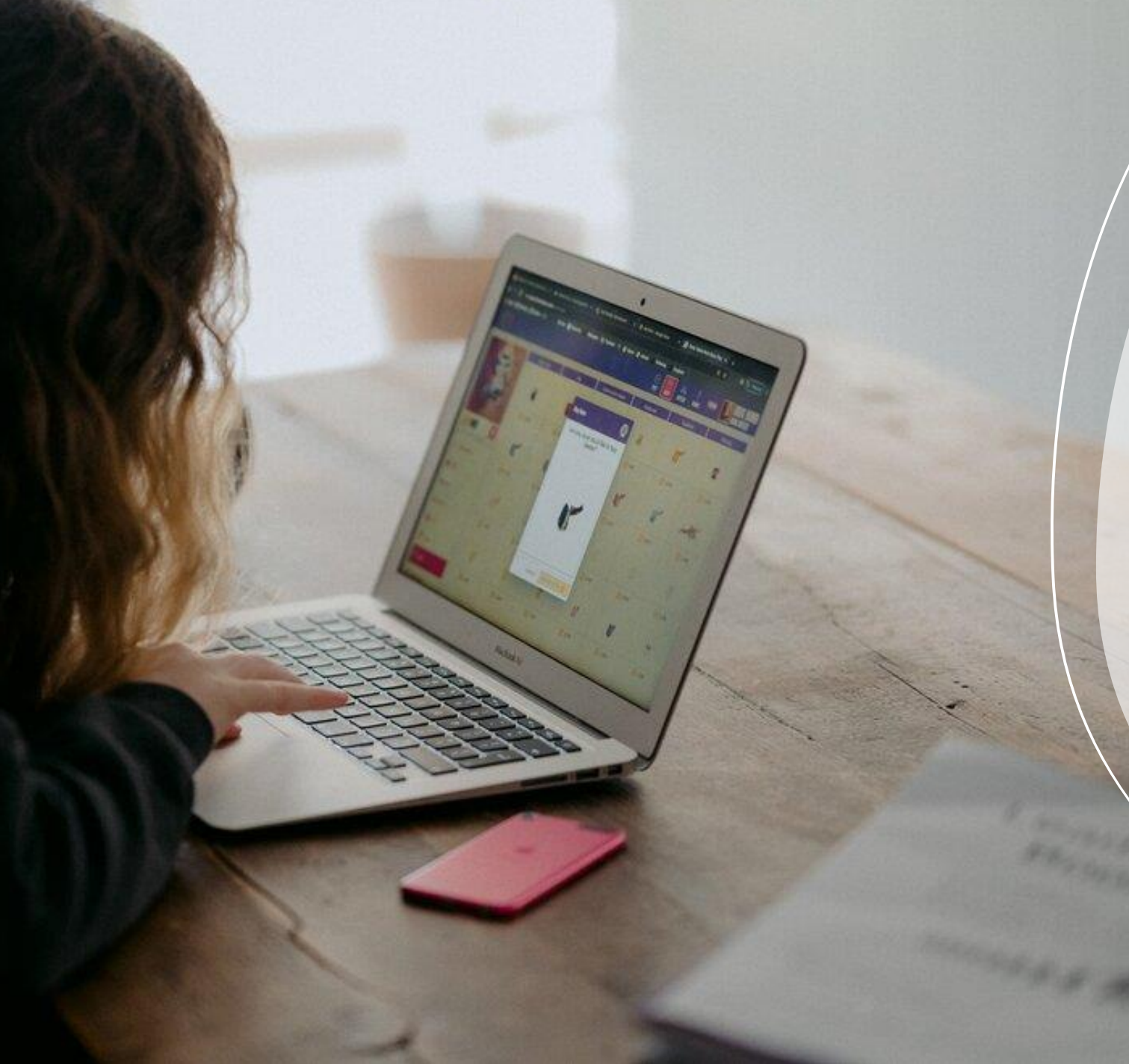


Showing empathy

Having patience and active listening skills to help better understand what's driving students' needs; finding strategies to help work through difficult moments together.

Feeling understood and supported is especially important for students who learn and think differently. It helps them stay motivated, increases self-awareness, and encourages them to advocate for themselves.

“All learners deserve empathy because it is a prerequisite for learning and growth” (Westman, 2021)



Being flexible

Meeting students' needs with multiple appointments

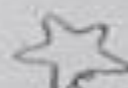

Whakatauki

He Aroha whakatō
he aroha puto mai


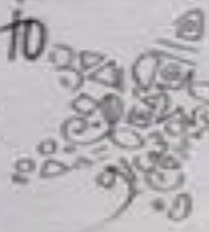
If love is sown, then love
you will receive.



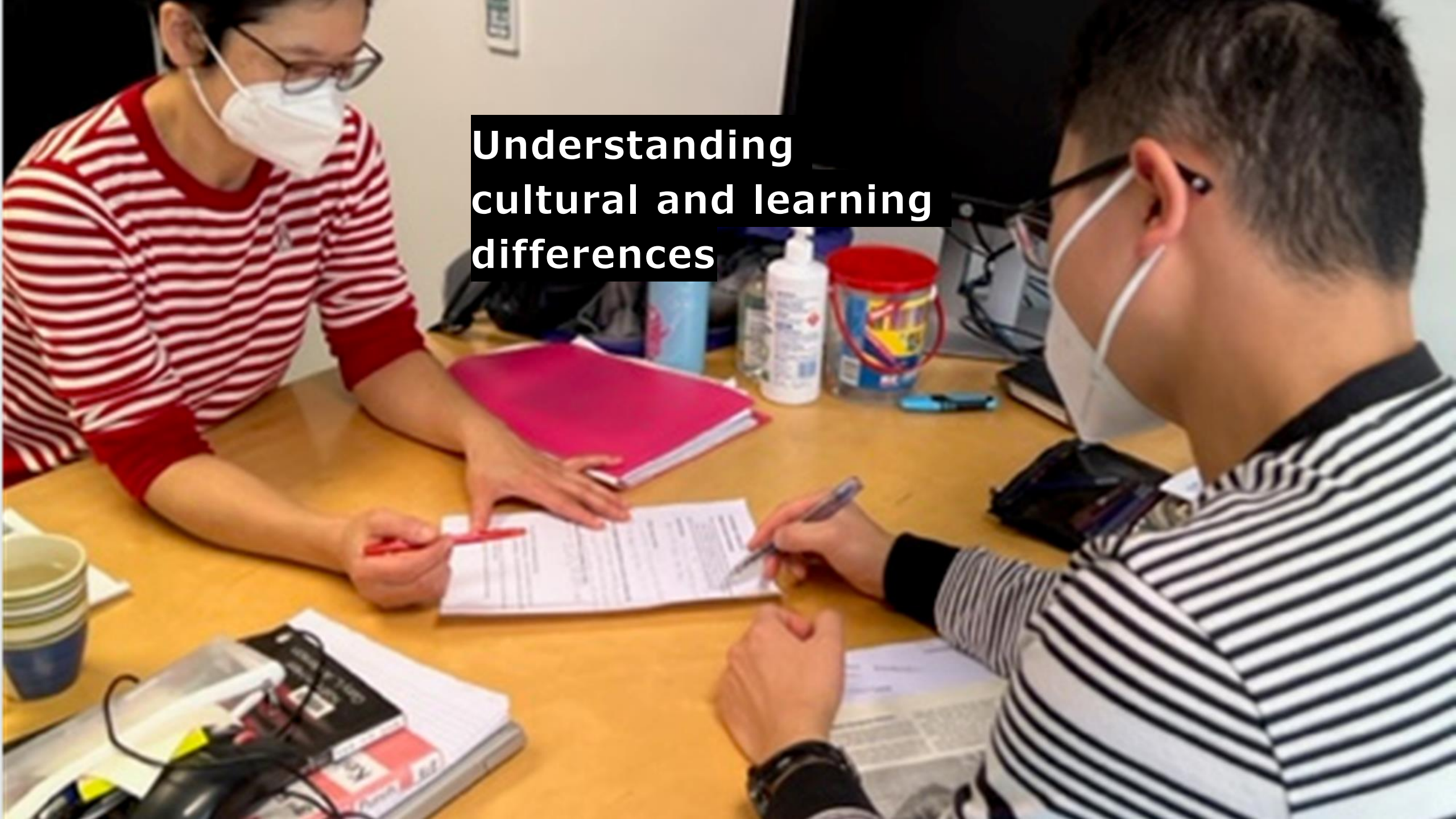
Dear Cindy,

 I wish I could find the perfect way to say **THANK YOU** for being so thoughtful, kind, supportive & always willing to help me. You always seem to know just what I needed to brighten my day. 

Thanks a million!

Caring is such a part of who you are, that I'm sure you're not even aware of some of the little kindness you do and what a massive difference they make. Your understanding & time all means so much to me. I am forever grateful to be under your wing. I'm going to miss you. With lots of love &  

**Understanding
cultural and learning
differences**



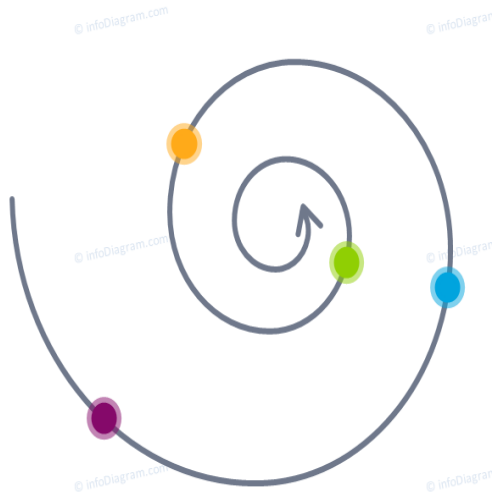
Establishing a relationship and understanding the differences in cultural and learning styles of international students.

They have been brought up to interpret and describe the world differently; this is reflected in their academic writing (Ryan, 2000, as cited in Tran, 2014)

Structure of writing

Oriental

pattern is inward turning spiral –
inductive, indirect and circular
approach to the topic



English

Pattern is linear which shows
direct approach to the topic



**Threshold concept in
academic writing
(Meyer & Land, 2003)**

**Is an opening up of a new way
of thinking and understanding
about academic writing**

**Difficult for Asian students to
progress without the transformed
way of knowing how to write in the
acceptable norm of academic writing**



A close-up photograph of a yellow pencil with a black stripe, sharpened, resting on a white surface. The pencil is positioned diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. The text "Examples of different cultural approaches to writing" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font in the upper right quadrant of the image.

**Examples of
different cultural
approaches to
writing**

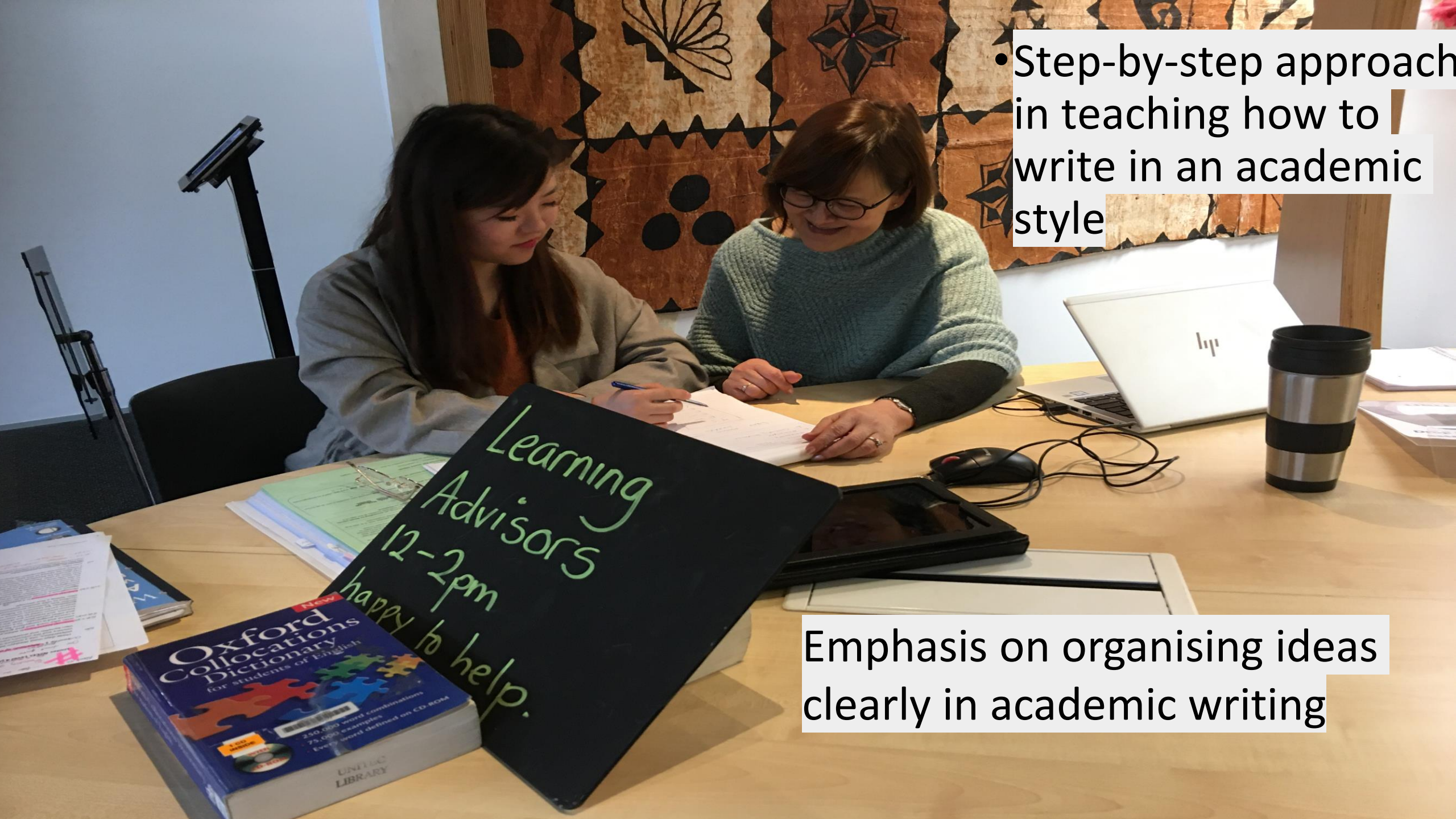


Explicit Teaching

Student writers need a more explicit approach to developing academic literacy and particularly the case with non-Western students entering the culturally challenging environment of higher education (Bailey, 2003).

• Step-by-step approach
in teaching how to
write in an academic
style

Emphasis on organising ideas
clearly in academic writing





Providing positive feedback helps build confidence and better writing



Positive feedback

has a positive impact on students' self-confidence helping them persevere with their written assignments, and subsequently receive higher grades (Gopee, & Dean, 2013)

Use questions to develop learners' critical thinking skills





Questioning

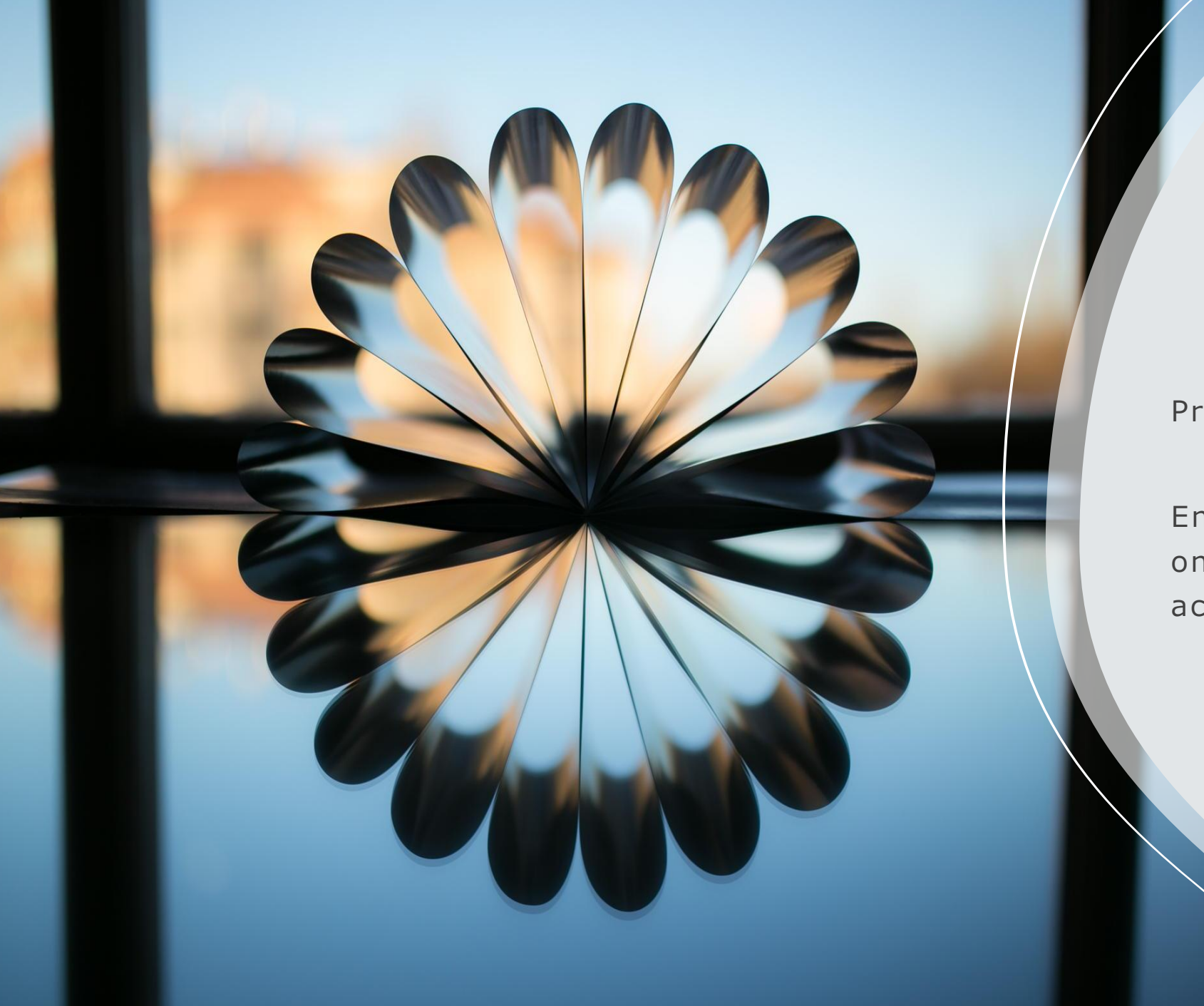
- Davoudi and Sadeghi (2015) affirm that high-level questions enhance the development of students' critical thinking abilities, increasing their writing abilities through scaffolding the learning process.

Helping students connect to the real world





Success!



Reflection:

Practise self-reflection

Encourage students to reflect on their development and achievements.

Conclusion

- Be mindful of each individual student's needs
- Appreciate students' views, cultures and challenges
- Maintain a student-centered approach and mindset, treating each student with sensitivity
- Reflect on practice as a learning advisor
- Be kind and approachable

References

- Bailey, R. (2003). *Holistic activities for developing academic writing skills in the EAP classroom*. Proceedings of the Second EATAW Conference. Central European University, Budapest.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345386210_Holistic_activities_for_developing_academic_writing_skills_in_the_English_for_Academic_Purposes_classroom
- Braine, M., & Parnell, J. (2011). Exploring student's perceptions and experience of personal tutors. *Nurse Education Today* 31, 904–910. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2011. 01.005
- Davoudi, M., & Sadeghi, N. A. (2015). A systematic review of research on questioning as a high-level cognitive strategy. *English Language Teaching*, 8(10). doi:10.5539/elt.v8n10p76
- Ghenghesh, P. (2018). Personal tutoring from the perspective of tutors and tutees. *Journal of Further Higher Education*. 42, 570–584. doi: 10.1080/0309877x.2017.1301409
- Gopee, N. & Dean, M. (2013). Strategies for successful academic writing – Institutional and non-institutional support for student. *Nurse Education Today* 33(12), 1624-1631
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2013.02.004>
- Jacobs, H.H., & Alcock, M. H. (2019). *Bold moves for schools*.
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/115013/chapters/Refreshed-Pedagogy-for-the-Contemporary-Learner.aspx>
- Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (2003). Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: Linkages to ways of thinking and practising within the disciplines. *ETL Project (Occasional Report 4.)*.
<http://www.etl.tla.ed.ac.uk/docs/ETLreport4.pdf>
- Tran, L. T. (2014). *International student adaptation to academic writing in higher education*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Westman, L. (2021). *Teaching with empathy: How to transform your practice by understanding your learners*



**Thank you for listening!
Any questions/comments?**

Cindy Wee

cwee@unitec.ac.nz

Ruth Laing

rlaing@unitec.ac.nz