

Evangelism Ideas with international students


What about some events we could do in our hall, as a group, or as individuals


- Start praying! Ask God to give you opportunities to meet international students
- Ask them about their religious background before you start to tell them about Christianity. Try and understand where they are coming from. What religious festivals do they celebrate? What does it mean to them? Who do they think God is?
- Ask them to come to international café with you, and introduce them to other Christians
- Run an event for a particular time of year – could your hall group put on a Christmas party, or a pancake party? Or invite them to one being put on elsewhere, and explain what it means to you as a Christian
- Many international students spend a very lonely Christmas in halls – could you invite one or two to spend a few days (perhaps even Christmas day) with you and your family at home?
- Invite them to church, or the CU, or to the carol service. Offer to get a bible for them (perhaps in their own language) and challenge them to read a gospel to find out about Jesus
- Find out about bible studies they could join, and invite them along. Or invite them to a hall group meeting
- Learn how to explain the gospel in a jargon free way, and think about the words that you use. E.g. What does the word “sin” mean in different cultures? How can we explain the gospel to someone from a shame/honour culture?
- Think about the issues that the students you might know could have with Christianity. Have you made friends with Muslim Malaysians? What will their view of Jesus be? Learn about Islam. Or have you got to know Chinese students – what will they think about God? What questions might they ask? Try and prepare in advance.
- Live a life that reflects what you say
- Don't give up! Keep on praying that God's name will be glorified.


For more resources, see www.friendsinternational.org.uk or www.uccf.org.uk

ABC of friendship and evangelism with international students

Friendship with international students

 Imagine you were going to work/study abroad, what do you think you would find most difficult? and how would you want people to behave towards you?

 What do you think might be the difficulties for those from other cultures in the UK, and what can we do to welcome those from other cultures?


 Think back to when you became a Christian. Who/what was the biggest influence behind your decision

For most of us, friendship is key. But 80% of international students have no British friends. There is great value in friendship and relationships, particularly across cultural and religious divides. Friendship has to be the first step if we are wanting to share the gospel with people from other cultures. If we are friends, then they respect us, and so are usually willing to learn more about why our faith is important to us. But how do we go about making friends with international students?

“Friendship is a biblical concept, notably God’s willingness to be our friend, as he was with Abraham and Moses. Jesus was a highly social person, always surrounded by men and women, young and old. He was criticised for being the friend of tax collectors and sinners. He made friends of the Twelve and of Lazarus and his sisters”
Michael Griffiths


Friendship hints with international friends

- Start with a smile and say hello
- Communicate clearly
- Get their name right
- Try and be well informed about their country
- Ask them how they do things differently in their country
- Ask them about their family, and what life is like back home
- Offer to help them with things here
- Respond to their invitations
- Cook something together
- Invite them to the cinema, for tea, or for a coffee
- We should always show a genuine interest
- We must not be 'culturally conceited'
- We must meet people where they are at – seek to know them
- Remember some cultures communicate "indirectly"
- We must not be frustrated if they do things we don't understand
- Be a good friend

 How can you encourage your hall group or other Christians to befriend international students?

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us"
1 Thess 2v8

Evangelism with International Students

 Firstly, let's think about the message, the good news. Spend 2 minutes writing down what the gospel is. What is the state of humanity, and why do we need God?

Where might you start with an international student?

Clear Communication

Ravi Zacharius was once speaking in a Russian university about Christianity. After half an hour or so Ravi asked if there were any questions. One student put up his hand and said: "You keep saying this word 'God'. What is that?"

- *If you refer to "the God we worship" a Japanese person might translate this as ancestor worship*
- *A Muslim would think you are not referring to Allah, the God of Islam, but to the God of Christianity, part of the blasphemous trinity, who took a wife in Mary, and had a Son, Jesus.*
- *If we mention "God" to somebody from a Hindu background they might think of any one of 3 million Gods.*
- *Chinese might show interest in God because they believe he has power only over the west, and would be worth getting to know whilst studying here.*




We need to be clear when we are referring to God, or to any other biblical concepts. It is so easy for us to be misunderstood.


ABC of friendship and evangelism with international students

Leaders notes


Friendship with international students

 Imagine you were going to work/study abroad, what do you think you would find most difficult? and how would you want people to behave towards you?

Language, food, climate, everything different, simple things (like knowing how to catch a bus etc), social relationships- how to address people, Friendship, helpful, understanding of mistakes, don't assume I know everything

 What do you think might be the difficulties for those from other cultures in the UK, and what can we do to welcome those from other cultures?

*Social relationships, food, weather, missing home
Meet those needs, welcome, offer friendship*

 Think back to when you became a Christian. Who was the biggest influence behind your decision

A book / A course (alpha or similar) / A Christian friend?

For most of us, friendship is key. But 80% of international students have no British friends. There is great value in friendship and relationships, particularly across cultural and religious divides. Friendship has to be the first step if we are wanting to share the gospel with people from other cultures. If we are friends, then they respect us, and so are usually willing to learn more about why our faith is important to us. But how do we go about making friends with international students?


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Friendship hints with international friends

- Start with a smile and say hello *Someone has to make the first move!
Use your natural opportunities when you meet people from other*

countries. They are probably more nervous about speaking to you than you are about speaking to them

- Communicate clearly - *we should speak slowly and distinctly!*
- We must make an effort to learn their name (*ask how to write it down*).
Ask what they prefer to be called
- Try and be well informed about: *world geography, politics, culture, religion, so that you will not offend them if you know very little about their country, and you will be able to ask intelligent questions.*
- Ask them how they do things differently in their country
- Ask them about their family, and what life is like back home
- Offer to help them with things here – *do they need some extra help with English? Could you help them with conversation? Could you show them how to book a train ticket, or suggest places to visit in the holidays*
- Respond to their invitations ... *if you know any Chinese students, they may be keen to invite you to try Chinese food, or to a Chinese new year party – try something new!*
- Many internationals love to learn how to cook *something British – invite them for dinner, or show them how to cook something British. Puddings always seem to go down well!*
- Why not invite a few international students along to something you are doing – e.g. to the cinema, or invite them for tea and cake
- We should always show a genuine interest. *People will know if the friendship we offer is genuine or not*
- We must not be 'culturally conceited'. *It is very easy to think that the way we do things is right and the way others do things is wrong.*
- We must meet people where they are at – seek to know them
- In some cultures, we shouldn't ask too many "direct questions", otherwise we will often get answers which we want to hear.
- We must not be frustrated or feel disrespected if some turn up late, or do other things which we don't understand.
- Involving relationship and friendship is a very biblical method: *"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us" 1 Thess 2v8*
- Be a good friend. *Within a genuine friendship, if there is understanding between you, then you can both make cultural "mistakes" without fear of upsetting the other.*

 How can you encourage your hall group or other Christians to befriend international students
share vision, point out students, organise event, include them

Evangelism with international students



Firstly, let's think about the message, the good news. Spend 2 minutes writing down what the gospel is. What is the state of humanity, and why do we need God.

Jargon free message, sin, need of God, cross, etc

Difficult, isn't it? But we need to be clear what we are sharing

Could mention shame and guilt

I just want us to think a little about communication:

Let's imagine we're having a conversation about God. Let me give you an example

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