

# **Small-scale action learning and research project as a tool to practice critical thinking and discovering practical industry challenges**

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# Main argument of the presentation

## Customised Program

For **custom designed programs** for international students it is important to expose them to a **new learning experience** taking them out of their familiar knowledge zone.

1

By doing a **small-scale, applied research** project using case study and an interpretive methodology they **learn new things in a different way**.

3

**Indonesian agricultural commodities** moving from 'upstream' to 'downstream' development (value-adding).

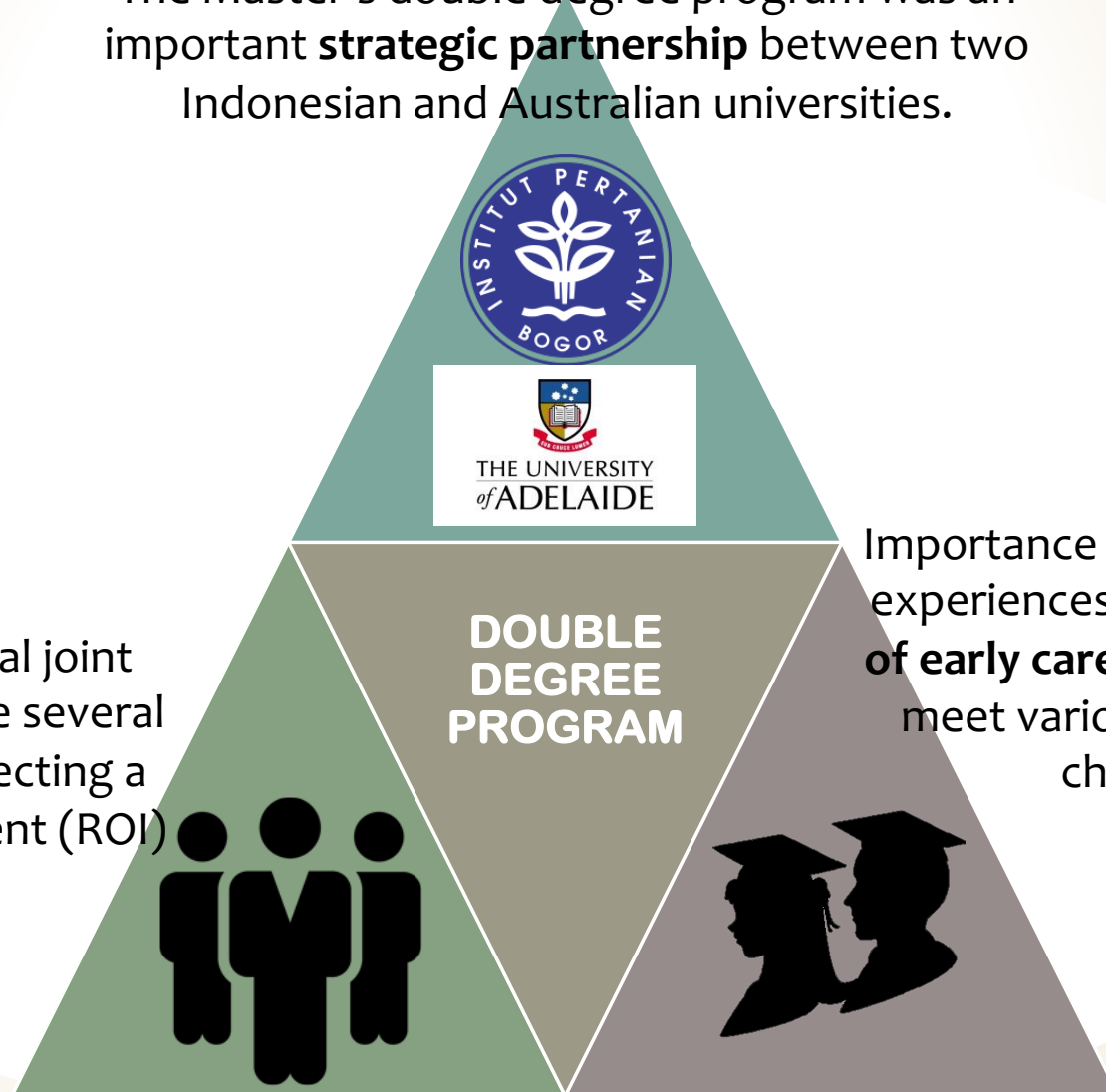
2

At the same time they start the **research with subject-matter** they have a **working knowledge and emotional engagement**

## Industry-based case studies

# A. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

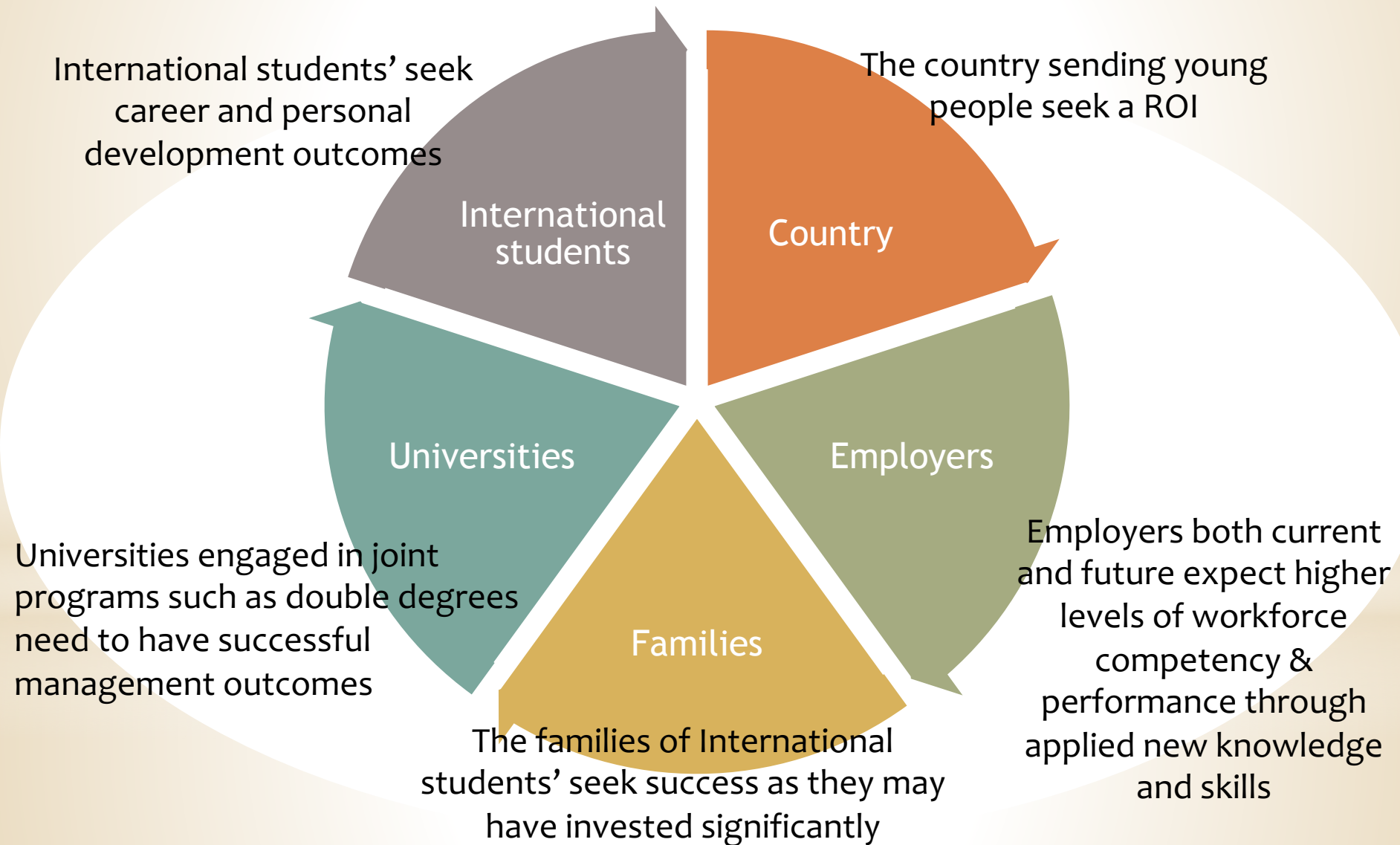
The Master's double degree program was an important **strategic partnership** between two Indonesian and Australian universities.



As an international joint venture there were several **stakeholders** expecting a return on investment (ROI)

Importance was placed on the experiences of a **small cohort of early career Indonesians** to meet various new learning challenges

# Expectations of return on investment in the international student market



# What it means to be an international student



to **satisfy all the stakeholders** that investment in their future development was a good one



to meet the **challenges of living in another country** and different socio-cultural environment



to meet the challenges of **new learning**




to transfer new learning (new knowledge and skills) and **continue career development**



to be an **agent of change** in the workplace and wider community

# New learning is central to the success of international higher education



The design of the applied research project was intended **to challenge the international students** (IPB double degree Master's) with a new learning experience.

The **emphasis on new learning experience** was considered a practical means of ensuring a ROI for all the stakeholders.

## B. APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT

*Small-scale research*  
based on case study

1

*Self-directed learning*  
as the main principle of  
adult learning

2

*Regular workshops* as a  
vehicle of progress

4

3  
*Action Learning*  
*Action Research* (ALAR)  
as a way to incrementally  
improve  
students' work



## B1. SMALL-SCALE RESEARCH

### Indonesian agriculture sector



1

Identify WIGO (what is going on)  
good practice & room for  
improvement

2

Focus on various perspectives of  
WIGO (owner-managers,  
industry consultants,  
government)

3

Identify the way forward

4

Connect research to innovation &  
change management ideas

5

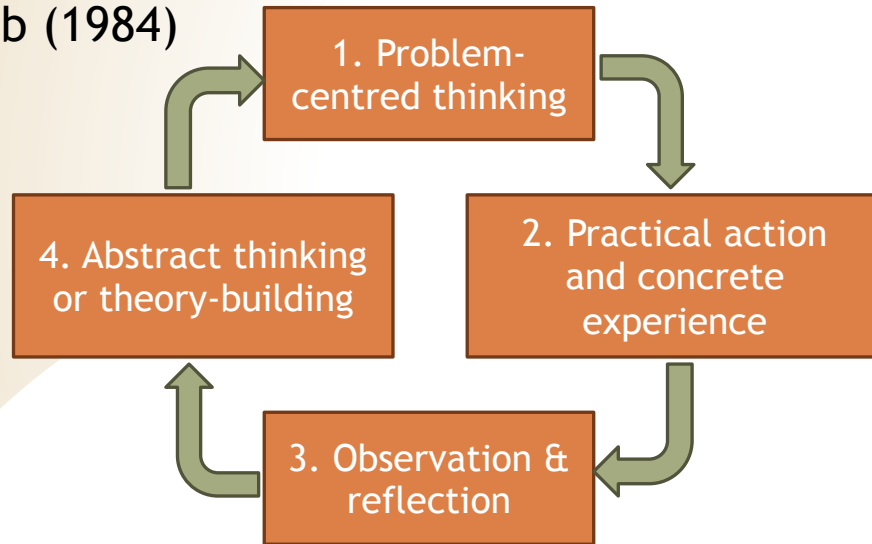
Explore possibility for  
entrepreneurship & private  
venture capital

### Downstream product development (DPD)

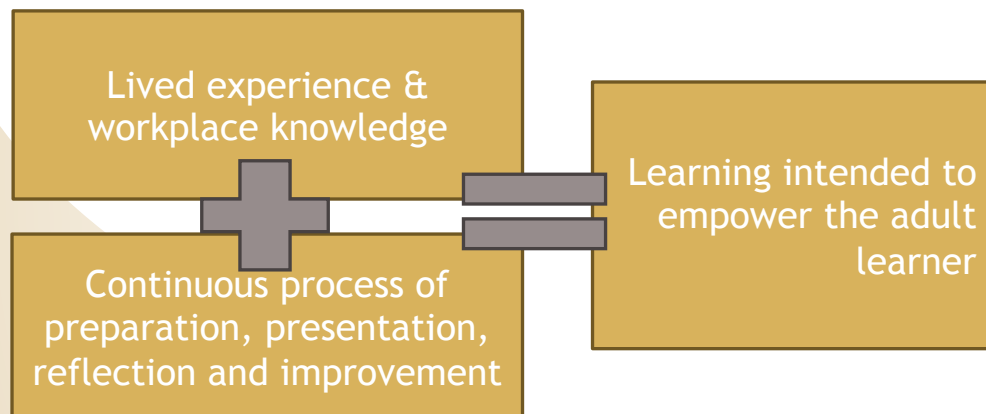




## Kolb (1984)

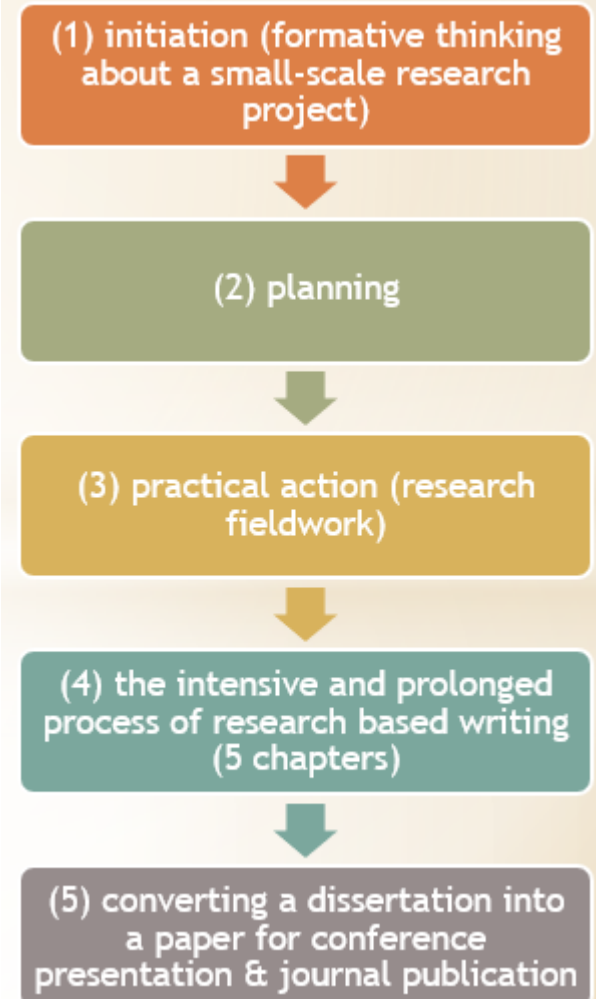


## Knowles (2014)

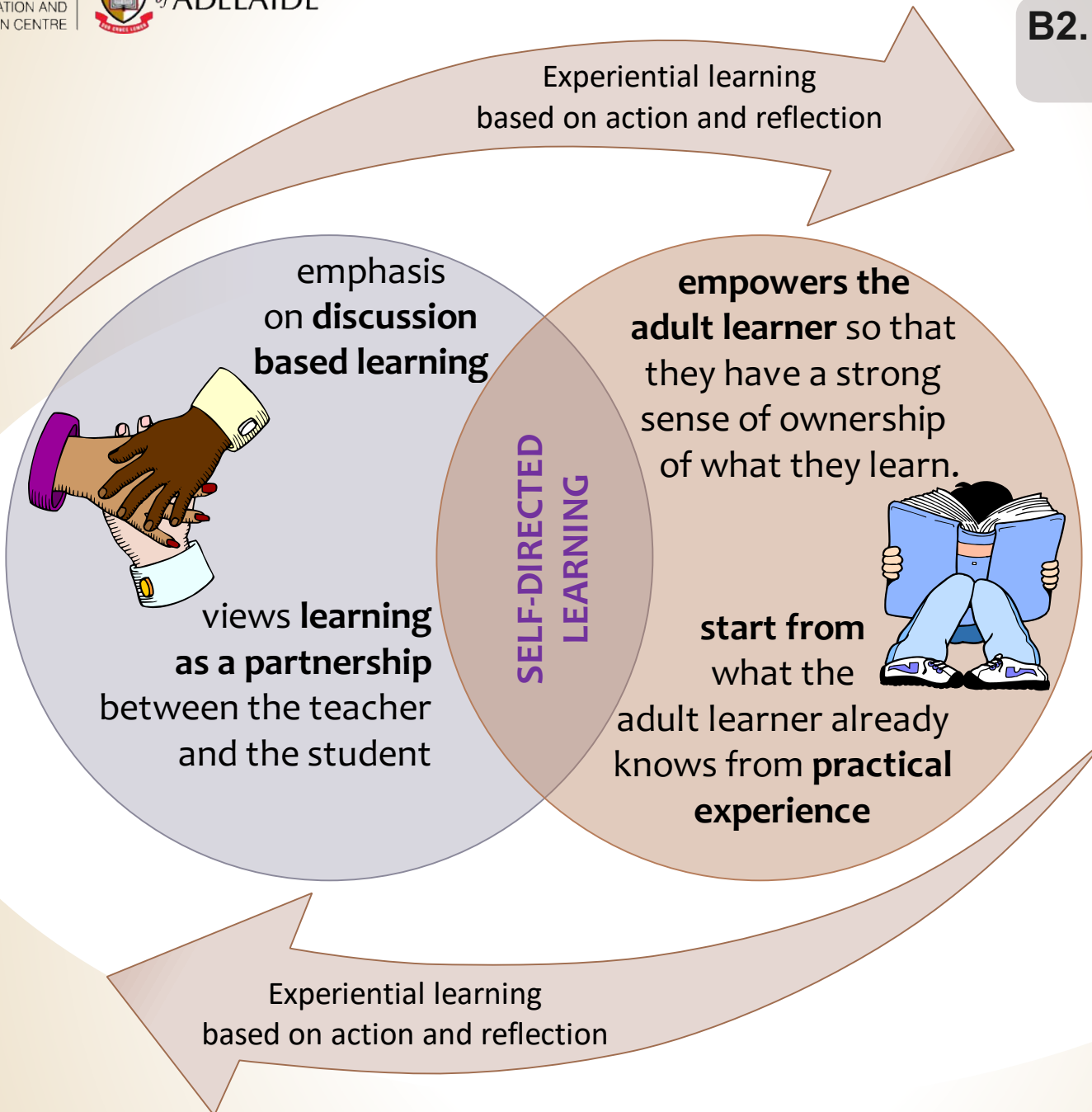


## Combining ALAR with Adult Learning Theory

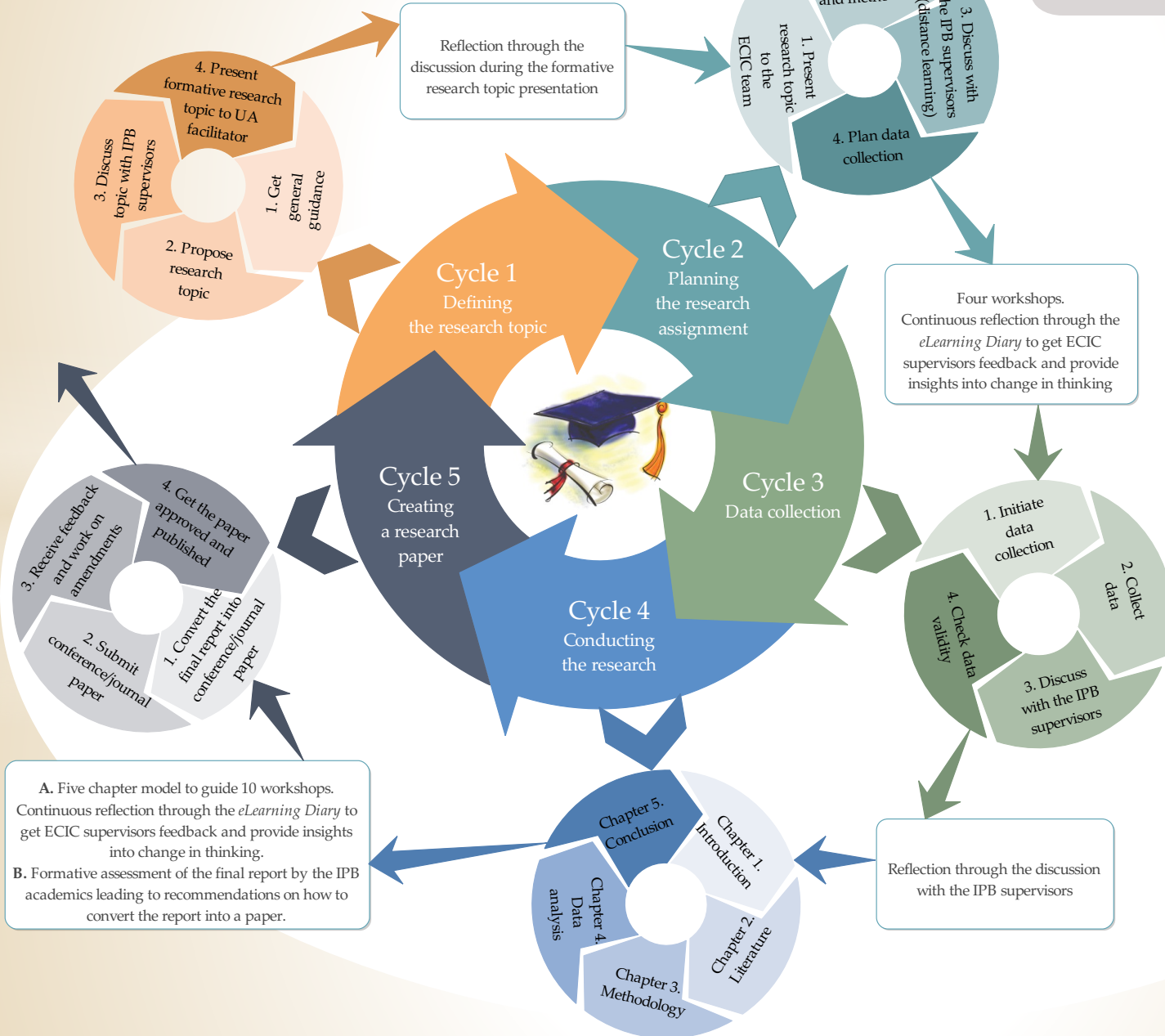
### Our Process



## B2. SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING



## B3. ACTION LEARNING ACTION RESEARCH (ALAR)



### Cycle 1. Initiate

Prepare and present the early and formative ideas for a possible research topic

### Cycle 2. Plan

Plan for the research implementation through a series of four workshops

### Cycle 3. Act

Data collection with research adjustment or refocusing

### Cycle 4. Reflect

Describe research through a series of five workshops leading to the final report

### Cycle 5. Act

Convert the report into a research paper (conference or journal)

## B4. ALAR APPROACH TO STUDENTS RESEARCH PROJECT

### Five chapter model

**CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

**CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE  
TOPIC LITERATURE**

**CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH  
METHODOLOGY**

**CHAPTER 4: REPORTING THE  
RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION &  
CONCLUSION**

**REFERENCES & APPENDICES**



### Regular workshops

- Two groups of IPB students: Group A and Group B (8-9 students per group)
- 2 research workshops for each chapter for each group (A&B) - 20 workshops in total
- **Support provided to students by IPB supervisors and ECIC academics** for extra guidance

### **Outcome:**

- An academic study suitable for conference presentation and publication
- A report style and action plan 'mini-dissertation'

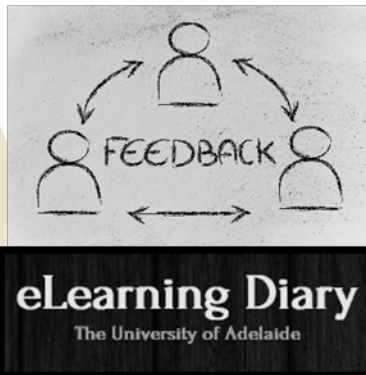
## B5. REGULAR WORKSHOPS



**Regular workshops** to make progress with students' projects.



Emphasis on **presentation**



Immediate **feedback** through the eLearning Diary.  
Use **eLearning Diary** for regular contact & instructions for next workshop and reflect on learning experience

**Support provided to students by IPB supervisors and ECIC academics** for extra guidance.

### **Outcome:**

- An **academic study** suitable for conference presentation and publication
- A **report style** and **action plan** executive summary

## C. RESEARCHING STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES

**What did students  
learn from overseas  
experiences?**



**What did we learn  
from overseas  
students?**

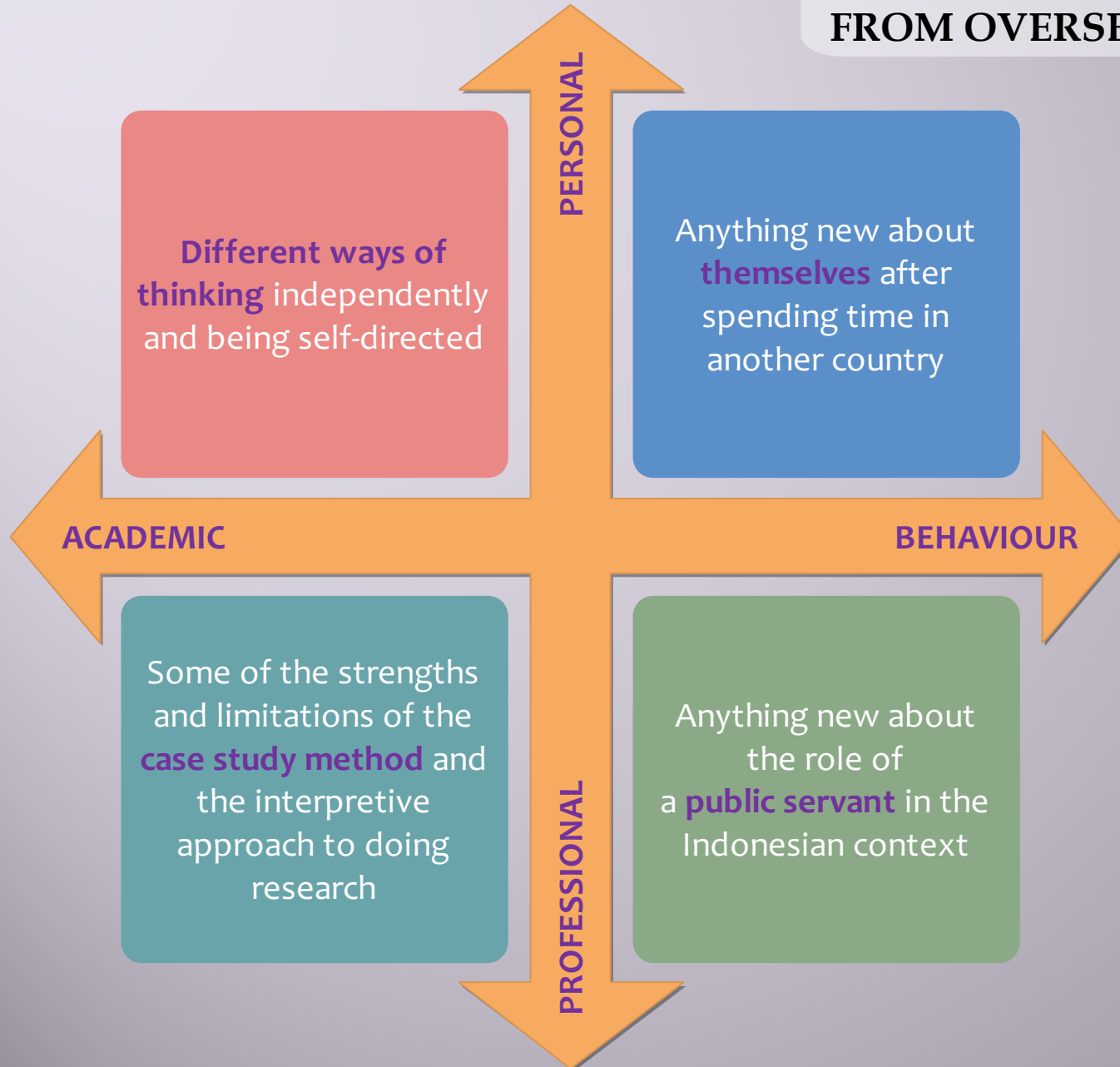


**How can we apply  
learning approach?**





## C. WHAT DID STUDENTS LEARN FROM OVERSEAS EXPERIENCES?





## C. HOW CAN WE APPLY LEARNING APPROACH? WHAT STAKEHOLDERS CAN LEARN?

Lessons  
learned

Programs for international students is big business & special attention should be focused on *customer needs*

Lessons  
learned

Although acquiring new knowledge is important having *new learning experiences* provides a longer-term strategy for competence and workforce development

Lessons  
learned

At Master's level competence development should be about learning to be *self-directed* and an *independent, critical thinker*

Lessons  
learned

International students benefit from being exposed to other new learning experiences, including *cross-cultural challenges*.

Lessons  
learned

Knowledge workers of the future need to be global thinkers and adaptive to a changing world

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THANK YOU