

## Finding Your Feet at University

University can provide fun & challenging experiences – the excitement of meeting new people, studying new subjects and gaining maturity and independence. However; for many students the transition to university can also present particular challenges - many students find it difficult being away from home, no longer surrounded by your circle of friends/familiar faces, comes the added pressure of fitting in along with the risk of feeling isolated or lonely.

It's important, therefore, to be aware of how you are feeling and to keep an eye out for your friends. If you are having ongoing difficulty adapting or are experiencing any of the below then then you should consider speaking to someone you trust:

- Feeling low or experiencing negative thoughts?
- Lost your appetite or are you eating more than usual?
- Finding it difficult to fall or stay asleep?
- Find yourself crying for no reason?
- Feeling alone, avoiding or dreading social interaction?
- Finding it difficult to motivate yourself?

**Be Mindful of Somatisation** – Medically unexplained physical symptoms such as headaches, insomnia and tummy issues can be an indication that you are not taking sufficient care of your mental health and wellbeing. Although you may feel embarrassed talking to friends or family about issues such as loneliness or homesickness, remember the people who care about you would want to make sure you get the proper help and support. A quick chat can often help you gain perspective and put the majority of worries to rest.

## Top Tips

### Try to eat some healthy food, it's amazing how it can keep Freshers' Flu at bay

Your new lifestyle can be really hectic and eating "fast food" or takeaways can easily become the norm. Take a little time out to cook a healthy meal, invite some new people around – it'll be much cheaper, more nutritious and a good way to make new friends.

### Don't worry if you don't make best friends with the people in your class

While it can be daunting, University is a huge opportunity to meet new people and make new friends, whether on your course, in your halls, community or clubs and societies! They are all great ways to meet likeminded people and take your social life to a whole new level. If you are finding it hard or daunting making friends then joining a society or sports team can provide the opportunity to meet new and like-minded people.

### Budget your student loan and give yourself a weekly limit!

Getting your student loan in one lump sum can be overwhelming and it can be tempting to spend more than you can really afford! Making a budget can be really helpful, as it lets you work out how much money you can spend each week, month or term.

### Don't worry if you're missing home

Feeling homesick is a very common experience, especially if you are moving a large distance from your hometown. Always make the most of opportunities to chat to new people - you never know, they could be in the same boat and would really appreciate a friendly face.

