

ADJUSTMENT TO CAMPUS LIFE

Adjusting to Campus Life can be really exciting, but it can also be somewhat overwhelming. Here are some of the challenges you may face and what you can do to manage these challenges!

First Year Challenges

University has a very different vibe from other kinds of learning institutions you may have been exposed to. Firstly it is generally a much bigger environment, and a bigger environment means more to get your head around. Secondly, being a young adult means more freedom and responsibility. This means that no lecturer is going to enforce that you attend your lectures regularly because the onus is on you. For most students this is greatly liberating, but it can also mean that things can slip if you do not keep your motivation levels up. The same applies more generally to managing your time and finding a balance between your work, your friends and other social activities.

Thirdly, the workload at University is also generally much bigger than what you may have been exposed to at school. This means that the way that you learn study and take notes has to adapt in order to manage this. Sometimes this can take a while. It is important to note that if you are concerned about it, and if you feel that you are not managing, speak to your lecturer and contact the CCDU. Finally, personal adjustments like staying away from home, living with a roommate, having to manage your own finances etc can take a lot of getting used to. Some common areas of adjustment and challenges students face are:

Practical Adjustments

- Transport
- Resources
- Medical Needs
- Food – buying and preparation
- Budget
- Dress
- Safety and security

Academic Adjustments

- School work versus university work
- Performance
- Volume of work
- Deadlines
- English proficiency
- New study methods
- Exams
- Tutorials
- No “spoon feeding”
- “Bunking”

Social Adjustments

- School life versus University life
- Relationships
- Peer pressure
- Spiritual religious facilities
- Establishing social network
- Diversity
- Greater freedom versus self discipline
- Rural versus Urban
- Rights awareness

These adjustments can result in you experiencing emotional and psychological reactions such as feeling:

Insecure	Positive	Angry
Overwhelmed	Excited	Confused
Unhappy	Happy	Isolated
Anxious	Independent	Homesick
Desperate	Motivated	Lonely
Indecisive	Enthusiastic	Stressed

All of these reactions are completely normal. If however you are feeling overwhelmed by what is happening for you, or if it feels like it is not going away you need to look out for the following **warning signs**:

- * Inability or failure to attend lectures regularly.
- * Inability to connect with study material/content.
- * Lengthy periods of stress and anxiety.
- * Strong feelings of dissonance of study direction

When you experience these Warning Signs you should remember the following:

- * Believe in yourself and why you are here.
- * Do not be afraid to ask for help.
- * Utilize help available on campus.
- * Talk to other first years - you are not alone.
- * Learn from your mistakes.
- * Take charge of what you need to know.
- * Talk to your family and support systems.
- * Balance is everything

