

Managing Expectations

When you first arrive at university, you may have certain expectations about how it will be. Remember to give yourself time to adjust. Things may not be exactly as you imagined, but that doesn't have to be a negative. Be open to new opportunities and experiences.

EXPECTATIONS

It can be tricky to settle in at university, especially if you have fixed ideas about what life will be like. These might be expectations about your social life, how well you will do academically, or how you will feel about being away from home. When things don't turn out exactly as you expected, it's easy to feel disappointed, or even worry that you've made the wrong decision in coming to university.

TAKE TIME

Don't panic. It's important to give yourself time to adjust to your new circumstances and not judge yourself too harshly. Remember that university life is different from your previous experiences and there will be new challenges. Try to be realistic and recognise that you are only at the beginning of your journey.

EVALUATE

Start by evaluating whether your initial expectations were realistic or if they need some adjustment. If university life is different from what you envisioned, it's helpful to reassess the situation and to try and be open to new experiences, rather than holding too firmly to your previous expectations. There will be numerous opportunities to try new things, explore different interests, and get involved with extracurricular activities.

TAKE CARE

Feelings of disappointment can take a toll, so try to be kind to yourself and where possible maintain a balanced lifestyle. Make time for activities you enjoy, exercise regularly, eat well, get enough sleep, and practice stress management techniques like mindfulness or relaxation exercises. Taking care of yourself will help you deal with challenges more effectively.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Recognise that setbacks and challenges are a normal part of life, and don't be discouraged by temporary setbacks. Use these bumps in the road as opportunities to challenge yourself and as motivation to become more resilient and confident in new areas. Focus on personal growth and learning, rather than comparing yourself to others or to your own preconceived expectations.

ASK FOR HELP

Give yourself time to adjust, stay open-minded about the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead, and ask for support when needed. If you are struggling, please remember that you are not alone. Speak with **firstpoint**, who can provide advice and guidance as well as directing you to the different sources of support.