

HOMESICKNESS



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Any change can be difficult. So it is not surprising that moving away from home can take some adjustment. Everything is new: people, buildings, responsibilities, available time, expectations...the list goes on! Some people seem to thrive on such change, finding the challenge of university an exciting time. For others the excitement can be mixed in with apprehension.

Some common thoughts and anxieties are:

How do I fit in? Others seem to be managing fine. I miss home. I miss my family, pets, friends, bedroom, etc. I am alone. Will I make friends? I'll never get used to this. This is not what I expected. Will I like my course? Will I manage my studies, exams, money, cooking?

Homesickness is very common – it can affect anybody in a new environment. Its intensity can vary from moments of missing home to overwhelming feelings of being lost and alone, accompanied by a strong desire to be back home. These feelings may come and go as you adjust to university life; also the severity of homesickness may change depending on what you are involved in at the time.

Homesickness tends to pass, and might leave you wondering why you were ever homesick in the first place, or not being sure when the feelings of homesickness disappeared. But while you are in the midst of feeling homesick it might be useful to keep the following in mind:

- There will be others around you that have similar feelings of homesickness – it is just not easy to tell who they are! (the person who appears the life and soul of the party might equally be masking their homesickness).
- Homesickness is just a reaction to dealing with a lot of change all at once – give yourself time to adjust;
- You don't have to deal with these feelings on your own.



Be kind to yourself

What would help you?

Some ideas are:

- Keep in contact with friends and family at home;
- Sit beside someone approachable in lectures;
- Take time to know the people you now live with – remember you are just finding out about each other;
- Be yourself – you are fine as you are, and don't need to pretend to be something you are not;

If you feel that you require an appointment as soon as possible, please email counselling@abertay.ac.uk. Appointments are based on staff availability, but we will try to see you within a few days. If it's an emergency, please refer to the resources listed below for urgent support details.

- Do continue pursuits that you enjoy – or try new ones – possibly increasing the chances of meeting others with the same interests.

Anything else that might give you relief from your homesickness – write your own list of things that are good for you, then you can refer to the list when you need to. Be creative! You could include things like take a bath, go to a public place and people watch, listen to your music, treat yourself to your favourite food or film or something else that is special to you.

Believe that you can do this, and that you will find your way. Remember it is perfectly natural to feel homesick when you have moved to a new environment.

WOULD IT HELP TO TALK TO SOMEONE?

Do not suffer homesickness alone.

Consider who you could share these feelings. With someone at home? What about someone you have met at Abertay – a student, or maybe a staff member?

You could also talk to someone in the Students Association, the Chaplaincy or the Counselling & Mental Health Service. Their purpose is to support students during their time at Abertay University, and if you need some support then please use it.

Student Association

2515, Kydd Building, Bell Street, Dundee, DD1 1HG

Email: hello@abertaysa.com | Tel: 01382 308301

University Facilities

Student Services manages a number of prayer rooms / quiet rooms across campus for groups and individuals of all faiths and none to meet, pray, meditate or reflect. abertay.ac.uk/life/student-support-and-services/faith-and-belief

Your GP

If you are experiencing regular emotional distress, talking to your GP is often a good step to take. Your GP should have some understanding of the difficulties you are experiencing and be aware of the various options available to you.

Abertay Counselling & Mental Health Service

Tel: 01382 308805 | Email: counselling@abertay.ac.uk

Our Experienced Staff Will:

- Listen carefully to what you have to say;
- Help you to explore and understand your difficulties;
- Help you to find ways of managing them more effectively.

We have a wide range of useful guides to common difficulties.



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ENQUIRIES:

Student Enquiry Zone (SEZ)

Level 1, The Library Building,
Abertay University,

Bell Street, Dundee DD1 1HG

T: 01382 308805/01382 308833

E: counselling@abertay.ac.uk

EQUALITY STATEMENT:

The University Equality Policy
can be found at:

abertay.ac.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion

