

Taking Control of My Wellbeing at Staffs



**A guide on how you can take care of your wellbeing at Staffordshire
University**

start to 
SUCCESS

WELLBEING at Staffs

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Transitioning into, throughout, and out of university life can have multiple challenges which at times can be overwhelming, cause stress and low mood. There are several healthy habits that you can incorporate into your life to support your physical and mental wellbeing.

This guide's main aim is to empower you to look after your physical and mental wellbeing and will cover:

- What is wellbeing Page-2
- How to keep well at university Page-5
 - Be Active Page-9
 - Eat Well Page-13
 - Sleep Well Page-14
 - Drugs and Alcohol Page-15
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- Support at Staffs and externally Page-19





What is Wellbeing?

We all have physical and mental wellbeing, both are interconnected, what effects physical well being affects mental wellbeing & vice versa.

Physical wellbeing is defined as not just the absence of disease but includes lifestyle behaviour choices to ensure health, avoid preventable diseases and conditions, and to live in a balanced state of body, mind, and spirit

Mental wellbeing is defined as not just the absence of mental illness, but a state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community

Our **mental wellbeing can change from day to day, week to week, and that is ok**. Check out [this video](#) explaining how mental wellbeing can change.

Lets be open about mental wellbeing

- 88% of students report often worrying
- 56% of students experience anxiety at university
- 47% of students experience depression at university
- 80% of students report often feeling lonely, with 1 in 3 students always experiencing loneliness
- 75% of students will not disclose mental health issues to those around them

Figures based on 17/18 Alterline survey and 2018 The Insight Network Survey

How are you today?

It is important to regularly check-in on how you are?

Are you excited 😄, happy 😊, meh 😐, sad 😞, stressed 😫?

It is ok to feel how you are

When we are feeling meh, sad or stressed it may be harder to think about what you can do that day to improve or manage this. University is a great time to learn and try different ways to manage and improve wellbeing which will equip you for life. This could be being active, eating well, taking time out, learning to manage thoughts. Staffs can help you on your journey which will be highlighted throughout this guide.



OPEN



5 ways to wellbeing

The 5 ways to wellbeing are evidence-based actions to improve overall wellbeing. These can be incorporated into a healthy lifestyle, at and beyond university, and will be highlighted on how to be active (page 7), eat well (page 12) and relax (page 18) at university.

**Be
Active**

*Do what you can,
enjoy what you do,
move your mood*

**Keep
Learning**

*Embrace new
experiences, see
opportunities,
surprise yourself*

Give

*Your time,
your words,
your presence*

**Take
Notice**

*Remember the
simple things that
give you joy*

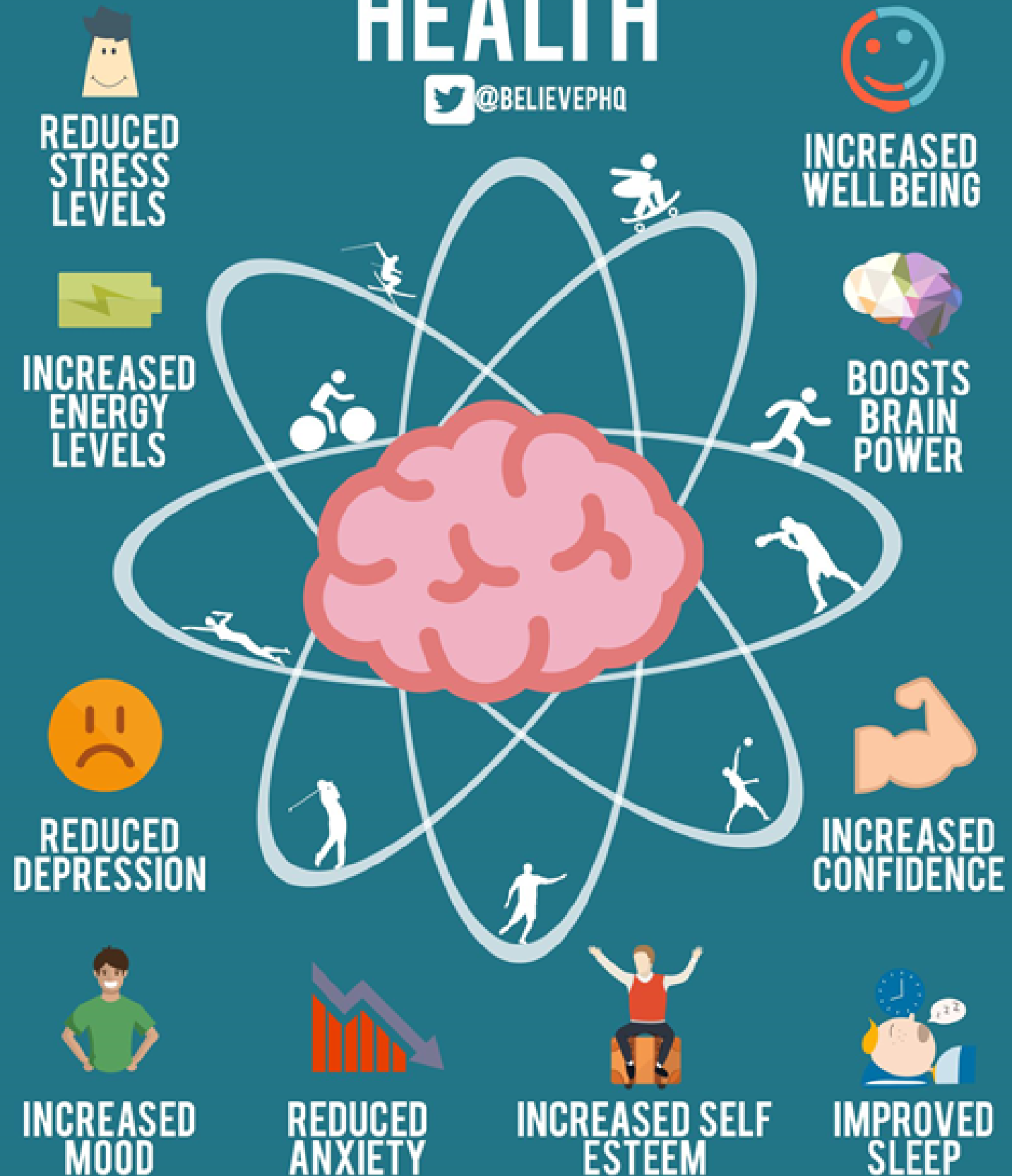
Connect

*Talk & listen,
be there.*

start to 
SUCCESS

THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE ON MENTAL HEALTH

@BELIEVEPHQ



Be Active

Being active shouldn't be seen as something we 'should' or 'have to' do - it's something to be enjoyed, and a wellbeing tool for our mental and physical health.

How Active?

Some activity is better than none. If the thought of playing a sport or doing a full out sweaty workout fills you with dread, simply try to move more during your day to day activities. See the next page for government recommendations

DID YOU KNOW?

Students who are active throughout their studies are more likely to obtain higher grades, feel more energised and have a good overall wellbeing

Physical activity for adults and older adults

Benefits health	Type II Diabetes -40%
Improves sleep	Cardiovascular disease -35%
Maintains healthy weight	Falls, depression etc. -30%
Manages stress	Joint and back pain -25%
Improves quality of life	Cancers (colon and breast) -20%

Reduces your chance of

Some is good, more is better Make a start today: it's never too late Every minute counts

Be active

at least **150** minutes moderate intensity per week
increased breathing able to talk

OR

at least **75** minutes vigorous intensity per week
breathing fast difficulty talking

or a combination of both

Build strength
to keep muscles, bones and joints strong

on at least **2** days a week

Swim, Brisk walk, Cycle, Gym, Carry heavy bags, Stairs, Sport, Yoga, Tai Chi, Bows

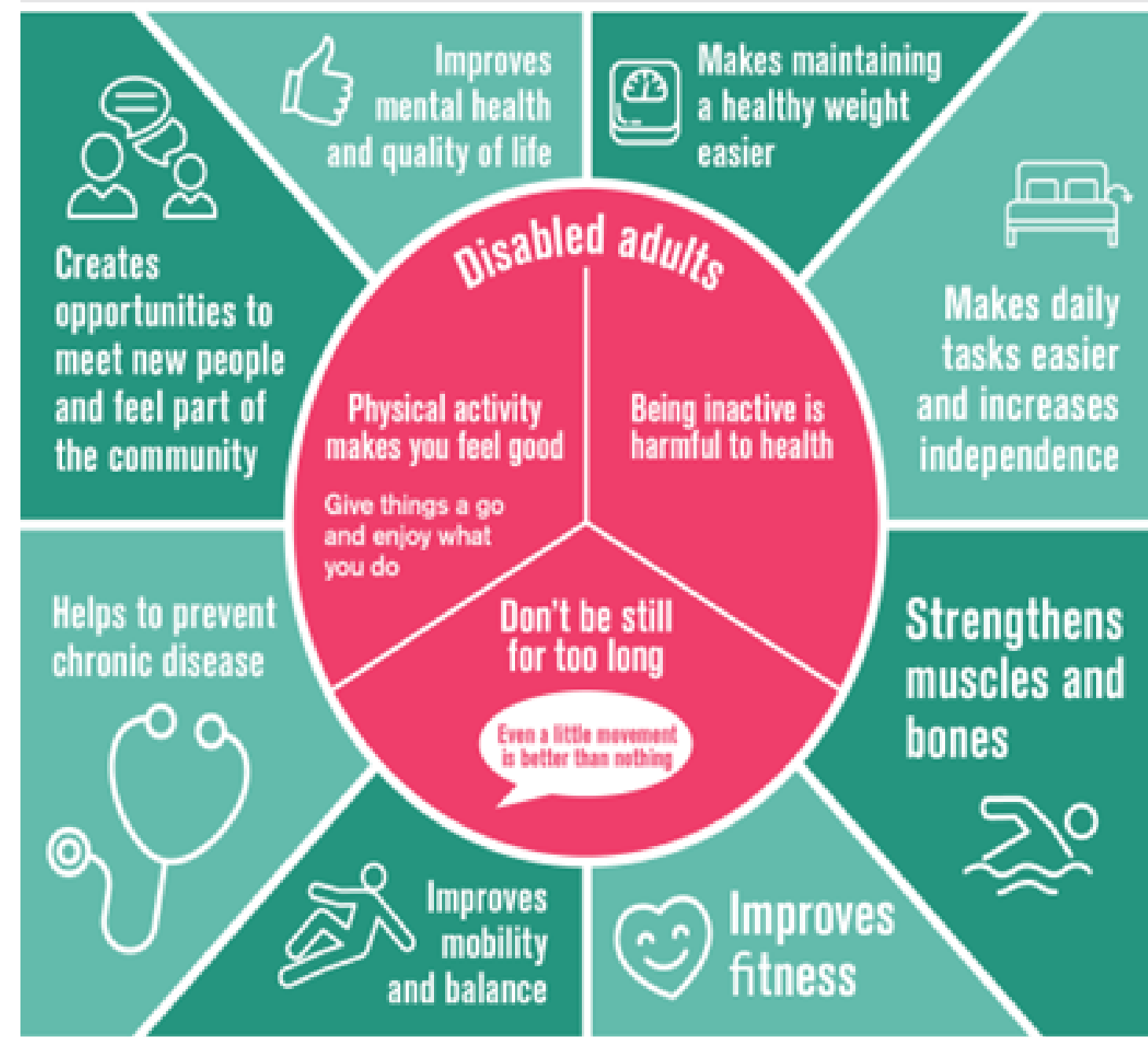
Minimise sedentary time
Break up periods of inactivity

Improve balance
2 days a week

For older adults, to reduce the chance of frailty and falls

Physical Activity for Disabled Adults

Make it a daily habit



Do strength and balance activities on at least two days per week

For substantial health gains aim for at least 150 minutes each week of moderate intensity activity

Remember the talk test:

Can talk, but not sing = moderate intensity activity

Difficulty talking without pausing = vigorous intensity activity

How to be active while studying








While studying take regular breaks and aim to move every hour

- Stretch
- If you can stand up
 - use a standing desk in the Library or appropriate height surface at home
 - read articles/books off tablets while standing or walking
 - stand-to-sit 10 times every hour

If studying at home, break-up your day with an exercise session

- [The Body Coach](#)
- [Yoga with Adriene](#)
- [Fitness Blender](#)
- [Sports Centre workouts](#)

If studying on campus...

- Look out for the posters around the library to increase physical activity 
- Join a sports team or a society (does not have to be sport specific could be gardening, drama, music) 
- Attend Social sport sessions – non-commitment, social sport sessions 
- Use the Sports centre – gym, exercise classes, squash courts, etc. You do not have to have a membership, you can pay per session 
- Explore staffordshire or take a walk around Stoke Campus– you could do this while catching up with a friend, or brainstorming project/work ideas 
- If you commute by car – park further away so you add some more exercise to your day 
- If you commute by bus – get off at the furthest stop away 

Useful apps to support being active

One You Active 10 Walk Tracker, tracks your walking and shows you when to increase your pace to benefit your health. The app is designed to quickly and simply help you do more brisk walking in bursts of 10 minutes. It tracks all your walking and rewards your progress.

One You Couch to 5K, has been designed to get you off the couch and running in just 9 weeks. Grab your trainers, download the app and follow the step-by-step instructions.

Rise & Recharge, promotes regular breaks in sitting. This app will allow you to monitor your sitting time. Aim to break-up your sitting at least every hour.

For this app to work you need to also download Google Fit.

Google Fit, monitors step count and exercise intensity and allows you to set goals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Prolonged sitting increases your risk of multiple diseases, fatigue and neck/backaches! Stretching, standing or going for a one minute walk every hour while studying will break-up prolonged sitting.



WALKING

BRISKLY FOR 10 MINUTES COUNTS AS EXERCISE

It gets your blood pumping faster and clears your head, as well as reducing your risk of heart disease and some cancers. So, take the first step and **download the free Active 10 app today.**



BECAUSE THERE'S ONLY
ONE YOU

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Eat Well

Eating a balanced diet by following the eat well guide (see next page) can contribute towards maintaining good health and help you feel your best by...

- improving mood
- boosting energy levels
- preventing and/or managing diseases

DID YOU KNOW?

Keeping hydrated is important for concentration while studying or doing any task. Keeping a reusable water bottle with you at all times should help remind you to regularly drink.

Eatwell Guide

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
1046kJ 250kcal	3.0g	1.3g	34g	0.9g
	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake

Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.



Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.

Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

Fruit and vegetables



Eat less often and in small amounts

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



Dairy and alternatives

Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

Eat well recommendations

Our eating habits affect our mood

- Eat regularly
- Start your day with a good breakfast
- Keep healthy snacks on hand
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Enjoy your food!

Watch this [video](#) for more information

You can find the [Vegetarian](#) and [Vegan](#) Eatwell Guide on the Vegetarian Society and Vegan Society websites.

Eat well on a budget

1) Plan your meals in advance

This means you can make a shopping list and cut down on food waste.

2) Cook from scratch

This is much cheaper than takeaways and can be healthier as you know exactly what is in the meal.

3) Buy fruit and vegetables frozen or canned

This is just as nutritional. Add 80g of frozen berries to porridge. Portion before you go to bed to defrost overnight ready for breakfast.

4) Add pulses (beans, peas or lentils)

This can bulk out meals (you can use less meat) and is healthier as pulses are packed with fibre, vitamins and minerals.

5) Try cheaper brands

There's not always much difference between the value and premium ranges.

6) Use student discount

Some supermarkets and shops give a student discount.
Always remember to ask



How to eat well at university

If at home...

- Cook a meal from scratch for friends or family
- Try making some healthy snacks for when your studying
- Prepare a healthy lunch and snacks ready for a study day



While on campus...

- Try out the different food outlets & SU Venues around campus
- Keep hydrated, carry a reusable bottle with you and fill up at the water stations across campus



While studying...

- Have a lunch break away from the desk with a friend
- Keep hydrated, regularly move away from where you are studying to get a drink



USEFUL APPS

One You Easy Meals
Change4Life Food Scanner
Tasty



Sleep Well

Getting a good night sleep can support our overall health and wellbeing

- Improves mood
- Boosts immunity
- Reduces the risk of mental illness
- Improves creativity, learning and productivity

Watch this [video](#) on tips for getting a good nights sleep

- Have a regular routine
- Create a restful environment
- Limit caffeine, smoking, alcohol and screen time

DID YOU KNOW?

Exercise can improve sleep especially when performed in the morning or afternoon. It is advised not to exercise 2 hours before bed as the stimulation may keep you awake



Drugs and Alcohol

We understand that a vibrant student life often includes socialising while drinking, and we have no wish to discourage sensible drinking. You are advised not to drink more than 14 units per week (which is the equivalent of 7 pints of beer or 14 single vodka & cokes). Excessive alcohol consumption can cause

- mental and physical health issues
- poor academic performance
- increases risk of being a victim of crime.

Information and support can be found at [Drinkaware](#) and [FRANK](#), but if you feel like you need any support for either yourself or a friend whilst studying at Keele you can speak to [Student Guidance](#).

USEFUL APPS

Drinkaware

One You Drink Free Days



Relax

It is important to take time away from your studies to care for your wellbeing, although this can be challenging when lives become hectic. However, taking time to relax can benefit our physical and mental wellbeing:

- Improve mood
- reduce fatigue
- Improve creativity
- improve concentration

Check out this [video](#) on tips on how to relax.

DID YOU KNOW

Going outside in green spaces has been shown to lower stress and boost mood! Why not relax outside.

Take notice of stress, thoughts and worries

It is hard to take time to relax when you are stressed and worried, so try to take notice of what is concerning you and take control of them.

Stress is a natural feeling, designed to help you cope in challenging situations. In small amounts, it can be good, because it pushes you to work hard and do your best, such as during exams. But if you are feeling very stressed or feel you cannot manage stress, it can lead to mental health illness such as depression and anxiety. It can also affect your academic performance.

Below are some useful videos on how to take control:

- Check out this [video](#) to learn how to take control of stress
- Check out this [video](#) to learn how to tackle worries
- Check out this [video](#) to learn how to reframe thoughts
- Check out this [video](#) to learn a mindful breathing exercise



Create a healthy routine

Schedule in time to relax!

University life can be very demanding balancing studies, working, other responsibilities and trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle. **A key skill to learn is time management**, not only will this make you a more successful student but this will help you reduce stress, especially around deadlines and exam periods.

- Checkout Staffs [Academic Skills](#) on top tips on [time management](#), as well as other study skill which will help you at and beyond University



How to relax at university

If at home...

- Have a cup of tea and enjoy it undistracted (no social media!)



- Get some fresh air



- Catch up with a friend



- Learn to meditate



- Try a new hobby e.g. sport, craft gardening, music



While on campus...

- Join a society



- Keep up to date with activities at Staffs with the MyStaffs App or follow Student Hub on social media



- Volunteer



IT IS OK TO ASK FOR HELP

Support for wellbeing at Staffs

Friends or Family: Others may be experiencing the same worries or concerns as you, so you may be able to help each other

Wellbeing mentors: trained students who can provide mental health support

Student Hub: One-stop shop for information, support and guidance

Support with academic issues at Staffs

Library- Provide research support

Academic Study skills- one-to-one study skills support

Personal Tutor- support personal and general academic development and provides a personalised point of contact with the University

External Support

Need to Talk to Someone

Togetherall; Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline; Changes

Mental Health Resources

Students Against Depression; Student Minds; Mind

Getting Active

Sports Centre; SASSOT; This Girl Can; Sport Societies

Eating Well

NHS; British Nutrition Foundation; Beat Eating disorders

Drug and Alcohol Support

Frank; we are with you; Staffordshire Treatment and Recovery Service

Feedback

Hopefully, this guide has given you some practical tips of looking after yourself during university and beyond.

We would appreciate it if you could give us some feedback on this guide so we can develop and better to support you at Staffordshire University. If you have time please fill out this survey

Click [HERE](#)

Take care during your studies,
[Start to Success Team.](#)



Guide originally developed as part of the Start to Success Project