

Self-Care Strategies





WELFARE

Providing social support and assisting you to further develop your life skills.

Appointments available:

- Centrelink information
- Financial first aid
- Welfare & wellbeing support

*Book a confidential appointment with
Student Advocacy & Support online
@ uqu.com.au/supporting-u*

How to Use This Booklet

University life can be a difficult balancing act with academics, social life, work life and any other issues that pop up along the way. There are times when you'll feel overwhelmed by the pressures of being at University.

Self-care strategies can enhance your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. Having a self-care strategy in place will help to alleviate stress and enable you to be more resilient in challenging times.

Take a look at the list below for some common warning signs indicating that you or a friend may not be doing so well.

- Withdrawing from social activities or interests
- Changes to sleeping patterns; sleeping more or at unusual hours
- Declining study performance
- Lack of concentration, an inability to complete tasks
- Over or under eating
- Binging on junk food
- Easily irritated, getting angry for no reason
- Risky behaviour
- Taking drugs, excessive drinking, making reckless or rash decisions
- Seems down, cries often or looks stressed out

If you have noticed any of these signs and feel you need extra support, book a Welfare appointment with SAS online at uqu.com.au/supporting-u

Diet

Eating a balanced diet is important to maintaining a healthy body and mind, especially during times of stress. Some quick tips to ensure that you are eating a well-balanced diet are below.

Aim for your 2 & 5

Having your 2 fruit and 5 vegetable serves each day is the easiest way to eat healthier. Where you can, opt for fresh, not only will your fruit and veg taste better, it will also be more nutritionally dense.

Plan your meals

It's likely that your diet will be healthier if you plan your meals in advance. There are many ways to plan quick and easy meals that fit into most schedules. If you are buying out, opt for the healthier options.

Go green over black

If you find yourself craving coffee or black tea all the time, try having a cup of green tea instead. Green tea contains a lot less caffeine which may improve your concentration and help you to fall asleep at night.

Balance it all

Eating well can be as simple as not having anything sweet one day, because you did the day before, or making sure that you are only drinking alcohol two or three nights a week. You can make simple rules for a balanced life.



Sleep

Having sufficient sleep each night helps you to learn, problem solve, regulate your emotions, and reduce anxiety and stress levels. You should be aiming for between 6 to 8 hours of sleep every night.

Schedule in sleep time

Set a regular time to wake up and go to sleep every night. This can be really important when studying/working Monday to Friday, but allow yourself some flexibility for later nights and sleep-ins on the weekend.

Create an end of night routine

Create a routine that you can go through to help you prepare both mentally and physically for bed. This may be having a shower and getting into your pyjamas half an hour before you intend to go to bed or having a cup of herbal tea.

You can have a different routine for each night of the week to account for variances in your schedule.

Reduce stimulations

Avoiding stimulating material an hour before bed can help your brain to wind down for the evening. This includes turning off your phone, tablet, computer, TV or putting down your book. This will give your brain the chance it needs to prepare for sleep.

Have a back up

If you go to bed and you cannot get to sleep within 30 minutes, have a relaxation activity that you can do. This could be listening to some calming music, meditating, practising mindfulness or stretching.



Exercise

Experts say that we should be aiming for 30 minutes of exercise each day, but not everyone is a fan of going to the gym. Below are some suggestions for incorporating exercise into your daily life.

Take the stairs & walk as much as possible

If you find yourself heading towards the lift or will drive to shops that are 5 minutes away, walk instead. If you need to speak with someone on campus, rather than emailing or calling, why not go for a walk and visit them in person? Likewise if you get coffee in the morning, visit a café that is further away.

Find a way to keep track of your activity

There are different ways to keep track of all physical activity that you have done throughout the day/week.

Download an app that tracks steps and calories to keep you on track.

Get up every hour during the day

If you are sitting a lot either at a desk or whilst reading, take a break and get up for 5 minutes every hour. Stretch, get a glass of water or walk around your area. If you are working with others, get them up and have a team break.

Go for a walk in the evenings

If you find that you have trouble unwinding from the day, go for a walk around the block. The change of scenery could help you unwind, which may be exactly what you need after a big day.



Social Life

Spending time with others is important to de-stress, laugh, cry and feel connected. Your social time should be positive and leave you feeling uplifted.

Balance your time

Scheduling time for social activities is important. As a rule of thumb you might want to allocate 1 hour of social time for every 10 hours of work (including paid, volunteer, study and house work).

Quality over quantity

Trying to socialise with all of your friends over one meal may not be the rewarding experience that you or they were looking for. Sometimes, the best social time is spent one-on-one with your partner, or one or two friends.

Combine social time with hobbies

You may like playing sport; this is combining both exercise and social time. Or you may love going out and sharing a meal with others. Combining your hobbies with social time will mean you fit more in each week.

Helping others in social time

Sometimes, life does not always go to plan. In these instances, you may be there to help someone who is in a position that needs it. When this happens, think of this as work time and make sure that you give yourself personal and social time to recharge afterwards.



Personal Time

With our busy lives, it can be hard to stop and take time out for ourselves. Like you would with social activity, make sure you balance your personal time and go for quality over quantity.

Take up a hobby

You may have had that one thing that you thought was amazing and wanted to do; archery, pottery, cheese making, or even gardening. Taking the opportunity to express yourself in a creative way is important for keeping your mental health in check.

Silence is golden

For some, meditation and yoga are great activities to engage with in personal time. You could go to a group class or try it by yourself. Alternatively, going for a walk in the park could be just as invigorating.

Read or watch it

If sitting down with a good book is your ideal way to spend a Sunday afternoon then do it. Not much of a reader? Put your favourite TV show on and get swept up in the drama.

Soak it out

Sometimes, all we need is a good hot shower, a bath to soak in or even a foot spa. You could do this either at home, or treat yourself and get pampered. No matter what you choose, relish the time and let the weight of the world fall away.

If you need support for any mental health related matters, contacting your General Practitioner is a good place to start.



Additional Support

For Students on Campus

Student Advocacy & Support
uqu.com.au/supporting-u

Student Services
uq.edu.au/student-services

UQ Health Service
uq.edu.au/healthservice

Australia Wide Resources

Beyond Blue
beyondblue.org.au

Black Dog Institute
blackdoginstitute.org.au

Headspace
headspace.org.au

Lifeline
lifeline.org.au

Kids Helpline
kidshelpline.com.au

ACADEMIC

Show Cause applications
Appeals
Grievance / complaints resolution
Student misconduct
Withdrawals & changing results
Re-remarks & assessment issues

VISA

UQ Enrollment related visa issues
Practical student visa advice
Student visa emergency assistance
Student visa extensions
Other UQ Student visa matters

JOB PREP

How to apply for jobs
Resume & cover letter assistance
Mock interview practise
Scholarship application help

LEGAL

Intellectual property agreements
Criminal & civil disputes
Consumer complaints
General legal advice / referrals
Residential Tenancy agreements
Motor vehicle accidents
Family law matters



STUDENT
ADVOCACY
& SUPPORT

We're here to support you.

PROVIDED BY



WELFARE

Centrelink Information
Creating social connections at
University
Strategies for coping with stress
Life hacks & tips for self care
Navigating University life