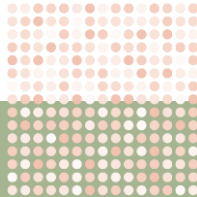




GLION SELF-HELP SERIES

Learning Support



Coping with stress



Stress is a natural part of student life — deadlines, exams, group work, internships, family responsibilities, and transitions can all create pressure. But with the right strategies, stress becomes manageable and even a source of growth.

This guide will help you understand stress, recognise when it becomes too much, and develop healthy ways to cope.



What is stress?

Stress is your body's response to challenges or demands.

It can be:

- Short-term (acute stress)
- Occurs before exams, presentations, or deadlines
- Can improve focus and motivation
- Long-term (chronic stress)
- Persists over weeks or months
- Can affect sleep, mood, and academic performance

Recognising the difference helps you decide which strategies to use.



Why managing stress matters?

- Improves concentration and memory
- Boosts productivity and energy
- Supports your mental and physical health
- Helps you stay motivated and confident
- Reduces burnout and anxiety





Step-by-step: how to cope with stress

1 Identify your stressors

Ask yourself:

- What is making me feel stressed?
- Is it academic, personal, financial, or social?
- Is it something I can control, or something I must accept?

Naming stress is the first step toward managing it.

2 Use healthy coping strategies

A Physical Strategies

- Move your body: walking, stretching, yoga, sports
- Sleep well: aim for 7–8 hours; a tired mind feels more stressed\$
- Eat balanced meals: avoid high sugar and excessive caffeine
- Use relaxation techniques: deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation

B Mental Strategies

- Break large tasks into smaller steps
- Use planners or checklists to regain a sense of control
- Practice mindfulness or grounding exercises
- Challenge negative thoughts (“What evidence do I have for this worry?”)

C Emotional Strategies

- Talk to someone you trust
- Express your feelings through writing or creative outlets
- Avoid bottling everything up

D Environmental Strategies

- Study in calm, organised spaces
- Reduce noise and visual distractions
- Plan breaks in advance to avoid burnout



3 Build a support system

- Connect with friends, classmates, or family
- Talk to lecturers if you're struggling with workload
- Use your school's counselling, wellbeing, or student support services
- Join study groups or campus activities to reduce isolation

Remember: asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.



4 Practice mindfulness and grounding

Even 2–5 minutes can help.

Try:

- **Box breathing:** inhale 4 sec → hold 4 sec → exhale 4 sec → hold 4 sec
- **5-4-3-2-1 grounding:** identify 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear, etc.
- **Body scan:** notice how each part of your body feels

Mindfulness brings you back to the present moment.



5 Know when stress is too much

Seek support if you experience:

- Persistent sadness or anxiety
- Trouble sleeping for more than a week
- Loss of motivation or appetite
- Feeling overwhelmed most days
- Difficulty managing daily tasks

Wellbeing services exist to support you — you are not alone.





Tips & Tricks

- Stress is not failure — it's a sign that something needs attention
- Celebrate small wins to stay motivated
- Say no to unnecessary commitments
- Keep perspective: one grade does not define your future
- Include joy in your routine: hobbies, creativity, friends
- Be kind to yourself — you are doing your best

More information on the library website here:





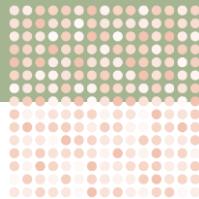
Sample stress coping plan

Stressor	How it affects me	Strategies I can use	Who can support me
Upcoming assignment deadline (2,500-word essay)	I feel overwhelmed, avoid starting, and worry I won't finish on time. Hard to concentrate.	Break the assignment into small tasks; use Pomodoro method; start with a 5-minute timer; study in library quiet zone; create a 7-day plan.	Lecturer (clarifying expectations); classmates (shared study session); librarian (help finding sources).
Lack of sleep	I wake up tired, lose motivation, and feel stressed by simple tasks.	Set a consistent sleep schedule; no screens after 23:00; use a calming routine before bed; avoid caffeine after 16:00.	Roommate (respect quiet hours); wellbeing advisor (if sleep problems persist).
Group project conflict	Feel anxious before meetings; tension makes it difficult to focus on the task itself.	Request a clear division of roles; communicate expectations; use shared documents; ask lecturer for support if conflict continues.	Group leader; lecturer (if mediation is needed).
Financial worries	Constant background stress and difficulty focusing on coursework.	Create a simple monthly budget; talk to student support about bursaries; schedule one hour each week for practical admin tasks.	Student financial services; trusted family member; wellbeing support.
Homesickness / Loneliness	Feel isolated; lower mood; less motivation to study.	Join campus activities; video call family regularly; spend time in communal spaces; exercise outdoors to boost endorphins.	Friends; student ambassadors; wellbeing counsellor.



Example: 1-week stress management plan

Day	Activity	Purpose
Monday	20-minute walk + organize weekly tasks	Reduce anxiety + increase clarity
Tuesday	Study in 25-minute Pomodoro blocks	Focus without burnout
Wednesday	Meet a friend for coffee	Social connection
Thursday	Mindfulness session (5-10 minutes)	Calm the mind
Friday	Complete one important task early	Build confidence
Weekend	Rest, sleep, and light exercise	Recharge batteries



Contact us

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