

International Student Support Weekly Bulletin



Tips & Advice for Home Working

Welcome to the first issue of the International Student Support Weekly Bulletin!

It is really important that you engage with your University online teaching to make sure you have a positive learning outcome.

Here are some tips to help you.

For all of you that are home working and might be living on your own or in a communal flat:

1. Decide your routine and try and maintain this. Include everything from looking after yourself, to when you are going to wake and go to sleep, to your work plan, relaxation, and the social contact you will have through digital/ phone calls. Routines seem to help us and settle our anxieties.
2. Digitally connect with others - set up a WhatsApp group if you have not already got one with your course mates, or other student friends. Make time for social communication with friends and family.
3. Decide your working day - this might be e.g. 8.30 - 4.30 so that you don't end up drifting into working all the time from 7am to 10pm. Limit yourself to a set number of working hours a day so that you don't overwork without realising it. Monitor this by writing it down. Divide the day into chunks of time. This might be 30 minutes or an hour. Have breaks. Get up and move.

If you are struggling with motivation, set a timer for 25 minutes, decide you are only going to work for 25 minutes and then take a break. There is a pomodoro technique which some homeworkers use to keep them motivated through the day.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomodoro_Technique

You might find it helpful to check in with your goals for the next month, week, day. Use a small group (e.g. other students). Use your friends, or course mates, or supervisors as partners.

Once you know what your goals are, then make a short list of 2 things you want to do in the day towards them. Don't set yourself too much to do. If you do the 2 things, then you can move onto a new target. Use this time to think about how long it takes you to do a task. Congratulate each other in your group for a good day's work. Spot if you are drifting and talk to someone in your support network as soon as possible.

4. Make sure you have a mix of relaxing and entertaining things to do as well as your work. You might need to develop this aspect, especially if you are staying home more often. You might decide to watch a film, that other friends also watch at the same time so you can chat about them. Read, listen to music, experiment with crafts (e.g. origami!). BUT try and switch off.

This is difficult if you are working and living in one room. Maybe create a ritual at the close of your working day that you physically clear off all your desk space and hide your work. Bring it out the next day.

Have screen free time to rest your eyes.

HOW TO CONTACT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM:

Website: www.bangor.ac.uk/international/support

Email: internationalsupport@bangor.ac.uk

www.facebook.com/BangorUniversityInternational

www.instagram.com/bangorinternational

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5. Limit unhelpful interactions on social media or the news. Limit how much news you read! It is very easy to become overly anxious by reading about the situation/other situations. Decide how to manage your social media and exposure to news. Think about how it affects your mood and adjust. There is a fine line between helpful and unhelpful communications.

6. Think about your exercise and self-care. Unless you are sick and needing to self-isolate by staying in your room, as of 17/3/2020 the Health Minister said it was OK to leave the house for exercise (this has since been limited to once daily). Make a time to walk. Maybe do this first thing in the morning when it is quieter. That also gets you out of bed and sets up the day.

You may find that you cannot do this and feel comfortable, or indeed the government advice changes. If so, we will all need to exercise from home.

You might need to find an online fitness video that you are interested in following. Some yoga, or stretching, or some jumps or routines that you can do in your room in a break. You need to keep your body moving as you will get serious back ache if you sit too much which will be miserable. You need to move frequently as desk-based working is terrible for our bodies.

You might also find it reduces anxiety to practice breathing or meditation. Have a look at the University Student Services web page:

<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/student-services/online-mental-health-resources.php.en>

There are apps like headspace which some people find useful and are providing free content at the moment.

<https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>

7. Drink enough water (in whatever form you like) to stay well hydrated - you will know what your best hydration level is. Likely around 1.5+ litres a day. Keep eating fruit and vegetables to keep yourself healthy. This will mean you need to leave the home to get provisions, so you need to think about that. It is very important to stay hydrated if you get a fever. Measure out the fluid you need to drink so you know you are drinking.

8. Looking after your mind and body is the most important thing you can do right now! It is easy to get isolated and feel low. Reach out to your friends, your university, your family if you find your mood getting low. Doing 1 - 7 above will help prevent this, however!

9. Your study and research are likely to be affected in all sorts of ways during this time. Be kind to yourself and have realistic expectations of yourself during this period.

Get used to using online platforms to have easy communications with others. There probably won't be face to face contact with people we are used to seeing regularly for some time, so we all need to move over to digital connections.

<https://zoom.us>

Stay safe everyone! We'll be sending another bulletin next week.

Here to listen — here to help! *Alan, Marcel & Louise*

