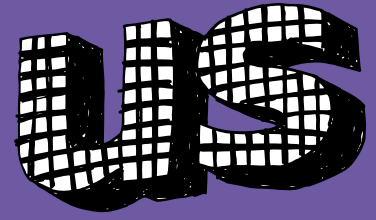


A problem shared

Your Union Advice newsletter – a little bit of help when you need it most

Issue 10 (Feb 2021)



What is Climate Anxiety?

By Nina, your Vice President (Education)

Hi, I'm Nina the Vice-President Education. For me climate anxiety is that hopeless feeling I get after watching yet another David Attenborough documentary, evidencing how humanity has historically impacted the environment. It's sitting there and wondering whether the little things we do every day actually make a difference? What will one repurposed bottle do to fight such an all-encompassing event like climate change?

The sad truth is that no, unfortunately the singular act of re-purposing or recycling one plastic item won't make as much difference as we would like it to. Larger scale legislative action is needed to make changes that will stick and make a difference in the long run.

Is this a reason to give up on being more eco-friendly? Most definitely not! While a singular decision won't make a lasting difference, making that same choice every day will. Committing to small changes and making them every day is what makes a lasting difference- and what drives companies to change the way they sell and package their products.

So, how does one actually deal with climate anxiety?

The first step in dealing with climate anxiety is accepting that you can't be perfect. It's better to have 10 imperfect individuals trying their best, than there is to have 10 people who tried to be perfect and gave up when that perfection wasn't achievable. In no way am I discouraging you from pushing yourself to be better but encourage you to assess where the boundaries lie in your lifestyle and accept what works for others might not work for you.

Another good tip would be choosing your battles- focus your energy on an issue that you can contribute to. This might be something small like writing a letter to your local MP or donating to a charity. Other more involved ways to contribute would be volunteering or running a campaign within your local community or university. Finding one thing to focus on will help with the generalized feeling of hopelessness.

My personal contribution has been adding a sustainability point into my manifesto. This has led to me working with the university to embed sustainability into the curriculum, as well as running the Sustainability: A Student Perspective event last October. I continue to be involved in conversations within the university that focus on the role of educational institutions in climate activism and change. I'll also be involved in the planning and organization of Green Week in February.

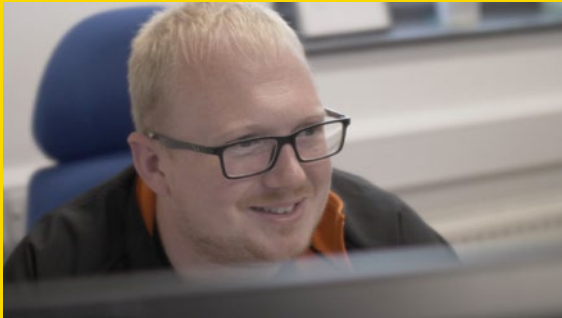
Finally, be kind to yourself. You don't have to read that news article if you know it will upset you. It's ok to shut your phone off if you feel overwhelmed. You may stumble along the way but getting back up again is what matters.

Tips on how to ensure you are looking after your mental health

It's that time of year where the build up to Christmas is over and the New Year's resolutions have been made. One New Year's resolution that should be the focal point for everyone is to look after your mental health. 2020 was a difficult year, particularly for students, and we don't know what's in store for 2021. Therefore, this article is dedicated to giving you tips and advice on how to look after your mental wellbeing so you can be your happiest and healthiest self.

Tip 1: Know what support is available to you.

The Union of Students Advice Service is a free impartial service available to all students. We are a friendly team who are passionate about ensuring you have the best time at University and are available to support you in a wide range of issues, including any that are impacting your studies. We are also able to signpost you to a variety of other services, including Student Wellbeing, if we feel you could benefit from speaking to a trained professional about any mental health struggles you are dealing with.



The results of a survey released by NUS showed concerning figures including, that 52% of students' wellbeing were negatively impacted by COVID-19 and only 29% of those students sought help. That's why it's essential to know where to go for support when you need it. Student Wellbeing are a free, professional service available to use for a variety of issues, including, low mood and anxiety, loneliness and isolation and any mental health issues that you are facing. You can find their contact information online derby.ac.uk/services/student-wellbeing-centre

Another support service that is available to you is the Samaritans, which are a registered charity which aims to provide emotional support for anybody feeling stressed and unable to cope. You can contact them by calling 116 123 or emailing jo@samaritans.org.

Tip 2: Look after your physical health

It's very cliché but a healthy body equals a healthy mind. That's why it's important to try and do even just a little bit of exercise each day. It can be difficult to get motivated when your mental health leaves you feeling sluggish and low in mood, but try and get out into the fresh air for a walk to clear your mind and release those endorphins.

It's also a good idea to look at what you're putting into your body. Eating nutritional foods that are high in protein, vitamins, complex carbohydrates and minerals help to keep your brain healthy and therefore, improve your mental health.



Tip 3: SLEEP SLEEP SLEEP

It's a known fact that lack of sleep can lead to a variety of issues including, lack of concentration, low mood, anxiety and is even linked with depression. That's why it's vital to get a good night sleep every night so you can wake up feeling ready for the day ahead. Remember to switch your phone off when you're ready to settle down into bed, as the blue light can negatively impact your sleep.

Overall, it's so important for you be in tune with your body and mind. Be aware of the signs that you aren't feeling yourself and seek help when you need it.



SUPPORT HUB

**Stay safe.
Stay well.
Stay connected.**

Tip 4: Access the Support Hub

Union staff and students at the university have created a support page with lots of info, activities and ideas to keep you safe, well and connected in 2021. Find out more at derbyunion.co.uk/covid

CET Workshop

These workshops are run by two Creative Expressive Art Therapy Students with the aim to build your self-esteem, confidence, interaction and wellbeing. The workshops are free and the activities will be tailored to meet the needs of each group and will include:

- Mark making
- Movement
- Expression through movement making
- Crafting

And more...

For more information contact: h.snaith1@unimail.derby.ac.uk or h.pini@unimail.derby.ac.uk

Advice Workshops

3 Feb – **Consent Training**

17 Feb – **Student Minds Look After your Mate Training**

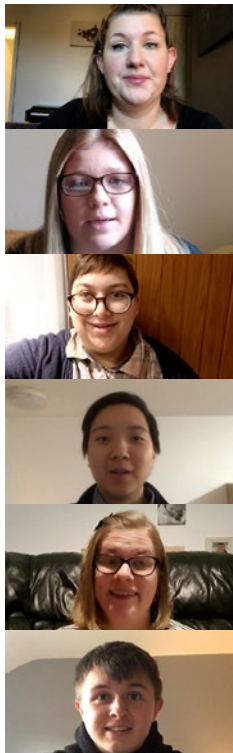
3 Mar – **Eating Disorder Training**

17 Mar – **Student Minds Look After your Mate Training**

14 Mar – **Consent Training**

28 Mar – **Student Minds Look After your Mate Training**

Our workshops are between 2–2.5 hours long and have limited places. If you're interested, sign up for free on our website at derbyunion.co.uk/advice



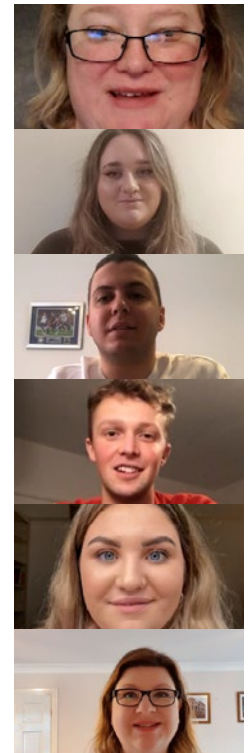
Join your PAL Leaders for support now!

This year the Union's launched an all new Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) scheme – where an existing student (PAL Leader) supports students who are in their first year by aiding their transition to university and academic study. They're basically buddies that help you out settling in to uni life and uni work: derbyunion.co.uk/pal

"We are here and ready to support you, particularly as we enter the busy assessment period. To get involved with PAL all you need to do is find your PAL leader and click the link to join their Teams channel.

"We have been in your position so you can feel confident asking any question relating to your studies (there are NO silly questions!).

"We will regularly share new tips and tricks to help you adjust, help you understand the support available at derby and introduce you to other students in related subjects."



NHS Free Condom Postal Service

your
**sexual
health
matters**

Your Sexual Health Matters provides a free and confidential condom and lube by post service to people who live in Derbyshire and Derby City.

Packs are sent in a discrete plain envelope with a plain postmark and will fit through a letter box.

They will process one order per month per person.

For more information, please visit yoursexualhealthmatters.org.uk/contraception/condoms/postal-condoms

Be aware of what you write on social media/group chats!

If you are part of any group chats, be mindful of what you are writing and commenting on. The advice service notes an increase in the number of students facing University disciplinarys due to their inappropriate engagement in social media and private group chats.

If you find your peers engaging in offensive conversations, either about a member of the University or any other derogatory topics, ensure you do not participate as you may be referred to a disciplinary meeting or PCPS meeting (for those on professional courses).

For more information on the PCPS procedures visit derby.ac.uk/about/academic-regulations/professional-conduct-and-professional-suitability-procedure

Representing your Academic interests

Making an appeal:

If you are unhappy with your grade and want to appeal it, the Advice Team are on hand to explain the procedure and help with your application. However, there are important things that you must know before deciding to make an appeal and we are going to outline them in this article.

Firstly, you must submit the appeal **within 10 working days** of formally receiving your grade. Remember, if you miss this deadline, your appeal will not be accepted!

Before submitting an appeal, it might be useful to speak to your Programme Team, Module Leader or for Postgraduate Students - your Supervision Team, to seek clarification to see if it can be resolved informally first.

If this isn't the case, then the next step is to make sure the reason for the appeal falls under one of four grounds. The grounds are as follows:

- Your performance in the assessment suffered through illness or other compelling circumstances which could not have been reported earlier
- The assessment was not carried out in accordance with the programme/module regulations
- The administrative procedures were not correctly followed
- Previously reported circumstances were not considered by the assessors, assessment board, relevant body etc.

If you believe that any of this has occurred then book an appointment with us online and we can help with your application.

What happens next

To submit an appeal, you have to fill in an Academic Appeals Form. Within five working days of receiving it, the Student Policy and Regulations Team will check it over to make sure it has been filled in fully and has enough evidence to support your claim. You will be then be told whether your form has been accepted and how long it will take for the investigation.

The investigation will usually be done by the Chair of Assessment Board, the Programme Leader and the relevant Dean/Director. They will decide whether your appeal is upheld or not.

Investigations usually take **about 20 days!**

Upheld

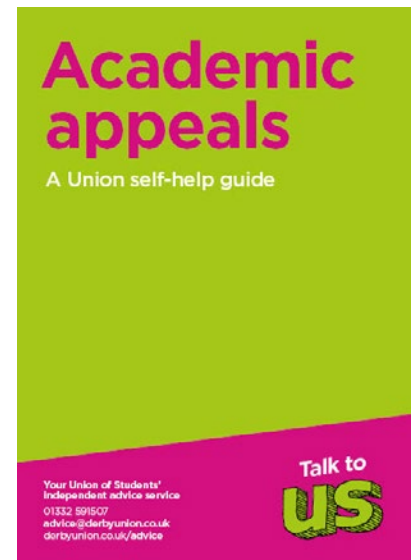
If your appeal is upheld, the Academic Registrar and Chair of Assessment Board will decide what action needs to be taken without the need for Formal Appeals Panel hearing.

If you disagree with the outcome, you have to respond within 10 working days of receiving the written notice, otherwise your case will be dismissed!

Formal Academic Appeals Panel

If the Chair of the Assessment Board and the Academic Registrar are not able to make a decision, they will refer it to the Formal Academic Appeals Panel which is made up of a University Manager, two academic members of staff and a student rep.

You will be notified **within 10 working days** if it goes to the panel and you can bring a Student Advisor along with you to represent your case- you just need to inform the panel five working days in advance of the panel meeting.



Improve the advice service

Any ideas on how to improve your advice service, we'd love to hear them. Either pop them onto the ideas forum via derbyunion.co.uk/ideas or contact us directly using the contact details below.

Live Chat

The Advice Team are now available through the Live Chat function on the Union website for quick guidance and information

derbyunion.co.uk/advice/livechat/

Your Union's independent advice service

Contact us on **01332 591507** if you need advice or help or email advice@derbyunion.co.uk

derbyunion.co.uk/advice