

From UNIFORM to INDEPENDENCE



FROM SCHOOL LEARNER TO COLLEGE STUDENT CAN BE A HUGE CULTURE SHOCK

Making the change from a learner to a student can best be described as a 'culture shock'.

Teachers, parents, friends and family try their best to prepare you for this life change, but often the focus is more on the academic side of things, while social changes are more dramatic and can present some major obstacles.

SIMPLY PUT, YOU WILL GO THROUGH A NUMBER OF PHASES WHEN YOU ADAPT TO YOUR NEW SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT.

Phase 1: Transition and Fascination You may initially feel fascinated and intrigued by observing a new social structure, but it is an anxious time while you learn to fit in.

Phase 2: Adjustment to Freedom You now have to adjust your life and learn to manage your life as a student. There is more responsibility, but also more personal freedom. A tricky one, even for the smartest, most street-savvy student.

ANXIETY IS NORMAL

You should above all remember that anxiety related to change is normal and healthy. You should never let fears of change interfere with this growing up process of becoming a student.



3 Challenges you will FACE

1 OVERINDULGING IN NEW FREEDOM

Without constant oversight from parents or teachers, students have to motivate themselves. Daily choices about attendance, studying, and social life become solely their responsibility.

IT'S NOT PARTY TIME EVERY DAY!

2 ISOLATION

This is one of the biggest challenges and can be one of the main reasons for first-year dropouts.

Make new friends. Hostel and private student organisations have many social events during which you can meet fellow students. Friends are crucial in avoiding isolation, minimising home-sickness and feeling like you belong. Join a society. Participating in a study group or playing sport will help you feel like you are part of something.

3 RISK OF INTOLERANCE

Respect all others. A significant part of adjusting is respecting others' places in the structure. Becoming socially acclimatised at university or college will expose you to people who are different to you, people with different languages, religions and values.

Make a conscious effort to learn about the people around you and remember that understanding is important.

