

# Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences

A brief guide on resilience, wellbeing and  
the support available while studying at UEA.



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## What is resilience?

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Resilience is our ability to bounce back and carry on when things at university, at work or in our personal life don't go to plan.

Resilient individuals experience difficulties, just like other people do, but their mental outlook and ways of coping with stress allow them to overcome problems and recover quickly. Less resilient people can become overwhelmed by their experiences and may dwell on their problems, unable to quickly bounce back from setbacks.

We all have a natural amount of resilience but can build and improve our natural levels. Resilience can also deteriorate- sometimes slowly without us noticing or sometimes all at once. This guide outlines some of the ways you can build and maintain your resilience.



## Why is this relevant to me?

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Studying at university and caring for others as part of a health professional course is an exciting and rewarding experience but it can also be stressful. Leaving home, keeping up with deadlines, exams and placements, developing a professional identity, and managing emotionally demanding tasks can be challenging.

Stress can also come from sources outside the course: family, relationships, financial concerns, physical or mental health difficulties. Despite being aware of these challenges, many students find it difficult to recognise - or accept - when they are not coping. As a result, many students leave it too late before making changes or asking for help.



## How would I know if I'm struggling?

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There are some key signs you may notice:

- Lacking energy or feeling tired.
- Feeling restless and agitated.
- Feeling overwhelmed.
- Being tearful.
- Not wanting to talk to or be around other people.
- Stopping or reducing doing enjoyable things.
- Using alcohol or drugs to feel better.
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things.
- Being late to lectures, missing these completely or staying late to study frequently but not getting anything completed.
- Finding it difficult to meet deadlines.
- Unable to make long term plans.
- Struggling to concentrate.



## How can I help myself?

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### Recognise the signs

If you notice one or more of the above signs in yourself or others, you should speak to someone.

### Look after yourself

Some simple, but often underestimated steps can really help:

- Get enough sleep.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Exercise.
- Make time for yourself to do things you enjoy.
- Keep in touch with family and friends.
- Have a balance of things outside of your studies.
- Plan ahead for times when assessments or deadlines are approaching.

### Seek support early

There is a lot of support available from your Personal Adviser, within your School, across UEA and externally. See page on 'Who can help me if I am struggling?'.



## How can I be more resilient?

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- Take care of yourself including your physical and emotional needs.
- Look after your physical health: get enough sleep, eat healthily and be physically active.
- Learn from experience.
- Be positive and hopeful.
- Reward yourself for your achievements.
- Keep things in perspective.
- Use your support network around you: talk to family and friends if you are finding things difficult; or use the support available at university such as your Personal Adviser.
- Seek help.



## Will seeking help prevent me from qualifying?

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**The answer is: NO**

A common misconception among students is that if you seek support, you risk being viewed as 'unfit to practice'. Registering bodies (i.e., GMC, BPS, HCPC, NMC and BABCP) and the University are very clear about this: Seeking support is a sign of strength not weakness!

For some University courses, you will need to be deemed "Fit to Practise". This is important for courses endorsed by Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies such as those in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Students are deemed fit to practise when they can demonstrate the skills, knowledge, character and health required to do their role safely and effectively. More information is provided here:

<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/students/advice-on-difficulties/fitness-to-practice>



## Who can help me if I'm struggling?

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### In the Faculty of Medicine and Health

- Your Personal Adviser/ Senior Adviser
- Course director
- Postgraduate Hub
- Disability Liaison Officers
- Peer Support Schemes (offer advice, tips and information about academic and social life on campus)

### At UEA - Student Support Services

- UEA Wellbeing Team

Students are able to refer themselves to the Wellbeing Service, either by visiting or telephoning (01603 592761) the Student Support Centre or by completing the self-referral form. This can be emailed to [studentsupport@uea.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@uea.ac.uk) or handed in to Reception in the Centre.

- Counselling

The UEA has a team of Counsellors and Mental Health Advisors who can offer support if you are experiencing psychological and emotional distress. To book an initial Wellbeing Triage appointment contact the Student Support Service on 01603 592761 or email [studentsupport@uea.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@uea.ac.uk). This appointment will last up to 30 minutes and will signpost you to the most appropriate support. You can also email [studentwellbeing@uea.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@uea.ac.uk).

### In a crisis

- Emergencies: 999
- Fast medical advice in a non-life threatening situation: 111
- UEA Security: 01603 592222
- UEA Nightline: 01603 597158 (8pm-8am every night during term time)
- Samaritans: 01603 611311 (8:00am to 9:00pm local call charges apply) or Freephone 116123 (24-hour service)
- UEA Medical Service: 01603 251600



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