

Coping With Exam Stress

From The Health Centre

Exams are a part of the University experience and it's normal for stress levels to increase when it comes to preparing for and sitting exams. When stress levels become too high however, our performance actually declines. Why? Well, simply put, when stress levels are too high, our brain and body thinks it's under threat so it prepares us to run, fight or freeze. Not ideal to experience during exams, right?



So how can you learn to manage your stress levels so you can optimise your performance?

Here are some tips that may help:

Behaviour that contributes to good performance:

- Create a detailed study plan and map it out on a schedule
- Take regular breaks - this gives your brain a break and improves performance
- Go back to basics—eat well, give yourself 8 hours of sleep, exercise and have some fun!

Thoughts and feelings that contribute to good performance:

- Our thoughts plus feelings together, influence our performance. So try to encourage neutral or positive self-talk rather than beat yourself up about exams. Chances are you'll feel better if you do!
- Put exams into perspective - they are important but they are but one slice of your life. There's more to you than your exam results! Just do your best.

What are some of the signs of... STRESS OVERLOAD???

- Excessive worrying or a busy mind
- Irritability
- Difficulty sleeping
- Tearful
- All work and no play, cutting out all your healthy habits

