

Back to Uni after the Holidays

How to get settled and remind yourself what it's like not having your mum doing your laundry

The Holidays are over and, sadly, for most of us that means switching warm blankets on a cosy couch to chilly, windswept walks towards campus at an excruciatingly early hour, the chances being that you haven't even smelled the morning air for a couple of weeks – at least before 11am. It most likely also means that *you* now have to take care of the laundry, and the grocery shopping, and that nasty pile of dishes at the bottom of the sink. We all know what this means, and it's something many of us struggle to cope with – University is starting again.

It's goodbye to the nice scented candles at your mum's warm house and hello to the alluring mixture of aromas around that one very specific bin on your walk home to your freezing cold flat. (Is that the smell of forgotten takeaway or did someone not quite make it home on their way back from the Tunnels?) But, worry not, it's not all bad news. With great responsibility comes great freedom – freedom to stay out all night and regret it when you get up 4 hours later to go to your 9am lecture the next morning, and freedom to skip going to the library again because, although you really *should* go, it's only week 2. *You'll catch up.* (Although you know you won't.)

I do have to admit, though, that with everyone busy making their New Year's resolutions for 2019, there is a slight glimmer of motivation somewhere in the darkness of my soul. I can *almost* feel it. And if *I* can almost feel it, that must mean that one of you can definitely feel it. So, as we approach this new semester with an ounce of bleakness and a pinch of desperation, I hope that you can take this as an encouragement to gather up the needed energy and just get on with it. To help you with this strenuous task, I've gathered up a list of 7 things to help you get settled and ready for another semester.

1. Get out of your bad routine and try waking up early – maybe even 10:30am instead of the usual time of 2pm – and hey, this time you don't have to hear your dad's snarky comments about millennials always sleeping in!
2. Don't get too wasted It's refreshers, and you can probably already hear that one guy from two flats over adjusting his speakers to Dua Lipa's *One Kiss*. If, despite this alarming fact, you still want to go to that party, just remember the simple rules to surviving (or even dodging) the dreaded hangover. I don't want to sound like your mum here, since we're trying to get away from that, but all I'm saying is that a glass of water before bed goes a long way. And maybe, *just maybe*, you don't have to do that seventh tequila shot 5 minutes before the club closes. Just love yourself a little bit. I know it's hard, but you can fake it for another semester.
3. Try to see the good in your classes – maybe you'll actually end up learning something interesting. There has to be some reason why you chose this degree, or those extra credit courses. Maybe this time, if you actually *listen* to the lecturer instead of scrolling through

Instagram for 50 minutes straight, you'll find that the things you're supposed to be learning aren't actually that boring at all. (No? It was worth a shot.)

4. Try to find a balance between reward and gluttony. An entire Mary Berry's cake from Morrison's can seem like a great idea to reward yourself for finishing your exams, but when you self-loathingly carry that sugar-frosted cake to the self-checkout counter for the third time that week, so that you can *definitely* avoid eye contact with the salesperson, you know it's gone a tad too far. Maybe next time you can just go for the good old pat on the back when you actually do your required reading.

5. Blankets. Everywhere. It's Aberdeen, it's cold. Some would even go so far as to say that it can get miserable. Instead of holding this as a grudge against our city, use it for your advantage - don't be ashamed to bring a blanket to the lecture hall – as long as you're there for that 9am on a Friday morning, no one will judge you for also bringing your blanket.

6. I know it's tempting, and I know you've heard this before, but don't skip that one class. We both know it's going to end up being much more than one skipped lecture after the first seal has been broken.

7. If you haven't already, try joining some student groups or societies. University seems much less excruciating when you've actually got friends to help you get through it. And here's the good news! Refreshers is a great opportunity for this. So, if you're going to get drunk, why not do it with new, interesting people instead of the same three flatmates from your first year that you already know you're going to ditch as soon as the graduation cap touches the top of your head?

All in all, the most important point to take from all of this is that if you could do it last semester, you can do it this semester. Soon, the days will start getting brighter. (Well, at least they'll start getting dark later and we'll get to enjoy the cloud covered sky for a few more hours a day.) You'll get back to your routine and, before you know it, you're worrying about exams again. And although the seagulls will never stop screeching, at least now you've got your new Air Pods to help drown out the noise.