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EMOTIONAL SUPPORT GUIDE FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD



Introduction

Moving to a new country is an exciting opportunity - you'll discover new places, meet new people, and experience a different culture. At the same time, it's completely normal to face some challenges and difficulties.

Many students feel homesick, especially during the first weeks or months. Being far from family, friends, and familiar surroundings can sometimes make you feel a bit lost, lonely, or overwhelmed. Adjusting to new customs, expectations, and ways of life can also take time.

Culture shock

Unfamiliar environments, cultures, and experiences can lead to stress, anxiety, and homesickness - what is commonly referred to as **“culture shock”**, which is a natural part of studying abroad.



Learn some tips

The “standard” culture shock cycle is only a general example. Your experience may not follow these stages exactly - you might move through them differently, skip some parts, or feel like you haven’t reached the adaptation phase at all. This is completely normal. **Everyone adjusts in their own way and at their own pace.**

Here are some tips that can help you deal with culture shock and homesickness:

Learn about the destination culture in advance.

- Learn the basics about culture, daily life, and social norms;
- Try to learn some basic words and phrases in the local language;
- Check practical things (e.g., climate, transportation).

This will help you to have realistic expectations and to avoid unpleasant surprises.



Learn some tips

Build your social circle

- Join clubs or activities (sports (e.g., football groups), dance, university groups);
- Attend events for international students;
- Try volunteering (e.g., teaching English);
- It's easier to connect through activities than casual conversations.

Stay connected to home

- Reach out to your family and friends back home;
- Bring a bit of home to your new place (decorate with photos, keepsakes, or anything that brings you comfort);
- Find restaurants that serve food from your home country, or try to cook it yourself;
- Keeping small routines from home can help you feel more comfortable (e.g., morning exercise, reading a favorite book).

Seek help if needed

Don't be afraid to seek help

- Try talking with other international students, as many of them are going through the same experiences as you;
- You're still members of MRU's community, so don't hesitate to register for online consultations.

Be patient with yourself - adjustment can take time (often 1–2 months or more)

Psychological support for members of the MRU community:

- Individual consultations in person and online
- Emotional support during crisis



<https://www.mruni.eu/en/psychological-support/>