



## University Counselling

# Anxiety

“I’m going crazy”

“I’ve gotta get out of here”

“What if I stuff up?”

“I can’t breathe properly”

“I’m never going to get my degree”

“I can’t cope”

“My chest hurts... I’m having a heart attack”

“If I can’t finish this assessment, I will fail and drop out”

“What if...? What if...? What if...? Then...?”

### Anxiety can be extremely debilitating and leads to avoidant behaviours like:

- Avoiding lectures, tutorials, placements.
- Avoiding social situations and busy places like shopping centres and university campuses.
- Turning to unhealthy behaviours such as alcohol and substance use.

Stress is to be expected from university students, along with some anxiety such as exam anxiety. Anxiety in the form of panic attacks, extreme worry or unrealistic fears or phobias may mean you are experiencing an anxiety disorder. With an anxiety disorder you will feel out of place and the anxiety will be interfering with your life. Sometimes it interferes in just one area, like exam anxiety but other times it is evident across multiple parts of your life.

### Tips

- Learn some breathing strategies. Breathe in for four seconds, hold for two seconds, then breathe out for six seconds. Check out our tip sheets on ‘Relaxation Techniques’ and ‘The Calming Breath’ to help you improve this skill.
- Tell yourself, “it is ok, these feelings will pass, I will get through this”.
- Face your fears in a ‘graded’ way – like climbing a ladder, one rung at a time.
- Check out the tips on the ‘Grounding Techniques’ tipsheet to help you stay in the present moment rather than worrying about the past or future.
- Seek help from a professional. Anxiety disorders are treatable.

### Help is available

- Contact your GP, the University Health Service on campus or Counselling.
- Talk to a family member or friend and ask them to take you to a professional.

### Links

[headspace](#)  
[Beyondblue](#)  
[Youthbeyondblue](#)  
[MindSpot](#)  
[E-couch](#)  
[AnxietyBC](#)

### Apps

Search on the App Store or Google Play

#### **Breathe (apple only)**

*Breathe helps you increase your deep breathing skills and gain better control over your physical responses*

#### **MindShift**

*MindShift is an app designed to help teens and young adults cope with anxiety*

#### **Reachout Worry**

*Track your worries and get tips on how to cope with them*

#### **Smiling Mind**

*Develop your mindfulness skills with the help of audio scripts.*