

Homesickness

Feeling homesick is common! Many people may have experienced the feelings associated with homesickness as a young child, or for many it may be the first time. Either way, the feelings may be overwhelming. These feelings are a normal response to moving away from home. Keep reading to gain a better understanding of homesickness.

How do you know you are homesick?

For many students the new start at BIT means moving away from home for the first time. This can be both a daunting and exciting experience. The start of a whole new adventure. Some students may experience homesickness a few days after arriving at their new home and for others it may take a few weeks.

If you experience homesickness you may feel some or all of the following:

- *depressed*
- *anxious*
- *unmotivated*
- *feel that you don't belong*
- *generally feel unwell*
- *pre-occupied with thoughts of home*
- *nothing feels familiar*
- *you new life does not meet your expectations*
- *feeling disloyal to those people you have left behind*
- *feeling alone and lonely*

Moving away from home to start your life at BIT means leaving people, places and things that are familiar to you and adapting to new people, places and things. The transition from home to Melbourne and BIT in particular, becomes easier as you adjust to your new environment. Give yourself time. You are not alone. Others may feel similar to you.

Quick tips

Here are some tips to help you deal with feeling homesick:-

1. *Acknowledge you may be feeling homesick. Tell yourself this is a normal response to adapting to your new environment.*
2. *Talk to family or a friend who may have experienced moving away from home before. Chances are they may have had similar feelings.*
3. *Keep in contact with people back home, either by phone, letter or email. Tell them you would like them to keep in touch with you.*
4. *Bring some familiar pictures/items from home.*
5. *Be realistic about your expectations. You are allowed to feel sad. Adjusting to the new environment takes time.*
6. *Get involved in activities such as starting or joining a cricket club. This is a great way to gain a sense of belonging and meet people.*
7. *Get to know your new surroundings. Familiarising yourself can lessen feelings of everything seeming strange and new.*
8. *Start a journal about your new adventure. Include your thoughts and feelings.*
9. *If possible plan a date to go home, or for people to visit you.*
10. *If you were involved in some club/church/group back home, then find out what your new neighbourhood has to offer.*

Talk to our student counsellor or international student advisor. These people are aware of the issue of homesickness and are well trained to support you.

Remember, you are not alone. Other students experience homesickness too!