

How to: First Year

There is no guide to your first year of university. Take it from me, a student who started on one course, and ended on another: it's a rollercoaster.

Let me take you to the beginning.

It all started when I was applying to universities all over the UK, from London to up North, with courses from Medicine to Biological Sciences. I knew the subject I wanted to study, but I wasn't sure on the path I wanted to take. After being rejected and declining offers from well-established universities, I was at a crossroad, but I took a chance by applying to Warwick to study Biomedical Science, with zero confidence that I would get accepted. With the help of RO, which aided with a contextual entry requirement, alongside hard work and resilience, I was accepted to study Biomedical Science.

With the support of student course reps and lecturers, I started in October, but something didn't feel right. I found that the content I was learning was not what I anticipated and did not focus on the aspect of science that I expected; it was more relevant to understanding and the treatment of human diseases, rather than health in a broader context, in association to biology and current global integrated science, which is where my interests lie. This disengagement caused me to struggle during revision, slack behind lectures and disconnect from the course content.

After seeking advice from family, friends and Warwick career advisers, I came to the conclusion that I had to withdraw from the course, as I was unhappy, and it was not where I wanted to be. This triggered an emotional collapse as I was worried that I'd have to redo my first year, change university or even take a gap year, which I did not want.

Over the Christmas break, I did further research on other similar Warwick courses and what they entailed. I came across the Health and Medical Science course and began to email and communicate with the course director, who guided me on how to continue my first year while transitioning to the course. I was supported and directed on how to catch up with work and ensure I am up to date.

This unquestioning support enabled me to organise and budget my time through strategies such as to-do lists, which allows me to prioritise my work according to my daily activities and successfully prepare for assignments, projects and exams.

Minimise Stress! - There is unconditional support available. You will find an empathetic support system within your peers and lecturers. You are never alone, no matter your circumstance.

Have Fun! - Make the most of your journey. Participate in group activities, socialise and establish friendships. Endeavour in all opportunities and customise your university experience.

***Just be patient and understand that everything happens for a reason.
Take control of what you have control of and let the rest fall in place.***

From a student like you,
Fatou Jallow

