

EXAM SEASON TAKES ITS TOLL AS ALMOST HALF OF STUDENTS MISS CLASSES DUE TO STRESS

www.thestudentroom.co.uk

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/exams-and-revision>

Almost half (43%) of students have missed school due to stress about exams, with A level students most likely to be impacted according to new research* released today.

The survey of over 1,100 students was conducted by The Student Room, the world's largest online student community, in partnership with Birmingham City University (BCU), to find out how students are coping with exam stress and anxiety.

The results highlighted that the pressure is impacting nearly all students – with 86% of respondents admitting that exam related stress has affected their ability to revise during study leave. Concerningly, more than one in 10 (13%) students reported missing over two weeks of school due to exam stress.

A level students are the worst affected, with 47% of students missing school due to stress compared to 37% of GCSE students.

Health concerns

Inability to concentrate (75%), feeling overwhelmed (71%) and constantly worrying (66%) were among the top reason preventing students from revising. The research also highlighted the detrimental impact on student health, with many students also experiencing low energy (63%), headaches (52%), insomnia (38%) and even panic attacks (34%).

Commenting on these concerns, Pete Langley, Director of Study Help at The Student Room, said: “Our survey highlights that for the majority of students sitting exams, stress is a worrying issue. Under the new GCSE and A level system, students can no longer rely on resits and coursework as they have done in previous years, so it is particularly concerning to see they are missing up to two weeks of classes due to stress. For students at any level, this amount of absenteeism without seeking support is likely to intensify feelings of anxiety as it becomes harder to catch up in time to sit exams.

On TSR, we frequently see lots of students talking about being overwhelmed and stressed out during revision and exam season. We always encourage students to seek help if they feel stress is impacting their physical and mental wellbeing, and encourage parents, teachers and universities to be proactive in offering support and spreading awareness of services available.”

Ineffective support

The research highlights that more could be done to support students, and that in some cases teachers and parents are increasing students’ stress levels. A quarter (25%) of respondents said their parents are making them feel worse about their exams, whilst over a third (34%) felt the same about their teachers.

Only 40% of students reported that their schools had offered them support in coping with stress, with one to one advice, group workshops and meditation sessions proving the most popular methods. However amongst students receiving support, over two thirds (70%) did not find this useful in coping with stress.

Advice from parents seemed to have a greater impact with over half of students (56%) who had received parental advice finding it helpful.

Stephanie Talliss-Foster, Director of Student Affairs at Birmingham City University, said: “Exam season is an increasingly stressful time for students at all levels and it can be challenging for students who are struggling to balance academic, work, social and family lives.

“Exams are an essential part of academic life, and it’s vital that parents, schools and universities provide support to students struggling with stress during this period. It’s crucial that our services are effective in providing students with healthy coping strategies to enable them to achieve their full academic potential and this is why we have set up our [exams and revision hub](#).”

**The Student Room polled 1,142 students from 2nd – 8th June 2018*

ENDS

About The Student Room

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>

Founded in 2001, The Student Room is the world's largest online student community and the UK's no.1 education website according to ComScore data. The Student Room has over 3 million registered members, primarily aged between 14-24 and attracts over 8 million visitors a month. It provides student-to-student advice on studying, educational career choice and lifestyle issues. The Student Room works directly with most UK universities as well as a wide range of leading brands and companies. 24/7 honest, realistic advice and support.

About Birmingham City University

With over 24,000 students from 80 countries, Birmingham City University is a large, diverse and increasingly popular place to study. The University puts students at the heart of everything it does, giving them the best opportunities for future success.