

AHC

HOW TO THRIVE

UOL

THIRD YEAR



WHAT'S INSIDE?

PAGE 1: INTRO PAGE

2-7: FINAL YEAR PROJECT PAGE

**8-9: STUDENT ADVICE FOR FINAL YEAR
PROJECTS**

**PAGE 10: TRANSITIONING FROM A YEAR
OUT**

**PAGE 11: STUDENT ADVICE ON
TRANSITIONING**

**PAGE 12-13: POST GRAD OPTIONS: GRAD
SCHEMES**

PAGE 14: POST GRAD OPTIONS: MASTERS

**PAGE 15: POST GRAD OPTIONS: TEACHER
TRAINING AND OTHER**

PAGE 16: STUDENT ADVICE ON POST GRAD

**PAGE 17: SUMMARY STUDENT ADVICE ON
THIRD YEAR**

This Thrive Guide was updated
in the Spring Semester of 2025
by Kathryn Ealand:
a final year undergraduate student,
studying History and Modern Languages.

**Hey there! My name is Rebekah and I'm currently studying
Theology and Religious studies.**

**I am one of the AHC student interns who has created this guide
alongside a series of others including first year, second year, joint
honours and international student guides!**

Final year can feel pretty daunting and it seems to come out of nowhere,
right! What seemed like only a few weeks ago at fresher's fair, is now
creeping up to graduation ceremonies!

This guide is made by students, for students – so it has all the tips that third
years have been gatekeeping all this time! Well - that's why we've collated
all the information you need in one place.

From dissertation help to post-grad options, we've got you covered. Don't
do third year in the dark!! Let us shed some light on the do's and don'ts.

FINAL YEAR PROJECT

EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS

- Everyone's been there... chosen a module that you are not all that interested in to fill your credits, and now you're left with a bunch of lecture catch-ups and the most tedious essay of the semester, right! One thing you may have learnt from this (since it certainly wasn't much content) was that it is flipping hard to power through the workload of a topic you aren't passionate about. Now imagine that x10 for your year long, 40 credit module!
- Yeah, it's pretty important to choose a topic you love. Think back to why you chose your degree and what you were really hoping to explore. Maybe it was something that was covered briefly in a previous module or a fascinating topic that came up in your research. If you are at a total dead-end, choose your strengths: what have you done well in?
- Remember to RUN YOUR IDEAS PAST YOUR FYP SUPERVISOR! This means that you can talk throughout your ideas, and they can troubleshoot anything that they see might come up as an issue. This also saves you wasting lots of time on a project that isn't feasible.
- Whatever it is, read broadly and grasp the bigger picture of the topic. Then find a gap in the research and choose a unique angle that gives your FYP that X-factor!
- It is also helpful to choose something that is relevant or trending so that you can justify why your research is important to the world.
- Even once you've chosen your title, it will probably change as your research refines your focus... that is totally fine! Be flexible and open and trust that your FYP will come together!
- If you do find that you are really struggling, talk to your Academic Dissertation/FYP supervisor ASAP (at the start or throughout the year!), they are there to help and guide you through this huge project, so don't be afraid to get their expertise; they are, after all, also the first one marking it!



FINAL YEAR PROJECT

ORGANISATION

One big tip from current third year students was to go go go!! Get started early on your project to avoid that second semester cramming and all -nighters in Eddy B.

Students have advised doing the bulk of research in semester one. Some have advised balancing your credits to weight semester one, however this isn't always possible and that is okay! In this case, we would advise making more progress with your dissertation in semester one so you can begin writing and sending off drafts to your supervisor. Never turn down a bit of formative feedback- it's a free ticket to a grade boost!

Organising your time to allow a specific time each week to focus on your FYP will help incorporate it into your schedule. It is time... go buy a diary. Yes- third year is the academic middle age era but you will thank me later.

One of the best bits of advice I recieved from a tutor was to remember that your FYP is a 40 credit module, therefore it's going to be as much work as 2 20 credit ones. Whilst spending 2 days per week on your FYP may feel like overkill to start with, remember that you're working towards a third of your final year grade!

It can be hard at the start of the year when the FYP deadline feels so illusive, but you'll be so glad you were consistent when February and March come around!

Advice given by a third-year student was to treat your degree like a 9-5. This means you can relax in the evening and plan time to head to Fruity, or chill at Hyde Park Book Club, all whilst getting a load of work completed during the day! Let's face it...nobody wants to be in Laidlaw at 10pm out of choice. Make the choice not to be in Laidlaw at 10pm by organizing your time well!

This can also be a flexible process! If a 10-6 or 11-7 works better for you trust in that and work to your best schedule. If you're continuing with a BUCS sport in final year and need Wednesday afternoons off, compensate this with a few hours on Sunday morning. The key message is balance, something that's so important for you to maintain your workload and stamina over the year.



Remember!

Not every AHC course necessarily requires you to do a traditional 12,000 word essay for your FYP. Make sure you have an explore and check out your [course catalogue](#) to ensure that you know exactly what options are on offer to you!



THIRD YEAR'S ADVICE FOR WELLBEING IN THIRD YEAR

"Schedule days off, speak to friends and family and try not to put too much pressure on yourself." Natasha

"Speak to your friends and have a scheduled rest day." Soph

"Look after yourself! Take extensions where needed and remember to enjoy yourself." Kate

Check out our '[Living at Home](#)', '[Commuters](#)', and '[Sober Life](#)' information pages for more advice on how to thrive in final year!

FINAL YEAR PROJECT

BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY

SLEEP... and no I don't mean caffeine. Swapping out sleep for caffeine is a favourite student pastime! Resting is necessary and it is productive. As much as our brains process information when we are working, the neural pathway connections form when we rest. Aside from this, 8 hours of sleep is a bare minimum and you should probably be mindful of this when you are at a Mischief Wednesday and get talked into staying another hour.... I don't judge (we've all been there).

Eating well. Something students are great at... From frozen pizzas to pot-noodles and the occasional Crispy's of course. What could go wrong, right! If you aren't fuelling yourself well then you can't expect to function at full capacity. Not only is a balanced and healthy diet great for mental wellbeing, increased productivity is another reason to swap your energy drink to water and your chocolate bar for fruit. (see some affordable and easy meal prep ideas [here!](#))



Laidlaw Library



Edward Boyle Library



Brotherton Library



Health Sciences Library

Study spaces have to be somewhere you will study... actually study and not have a nap or scroll through the deepest darkest depths of TikTok. Having separate spaces for work and rest will help your brain get into patterns of activity when you enter this different spaces. Therefore you can really "lock in" when in the library, and can fully relax at home!

Here are students' top recommendations for study spots!

Esther Simpson Café

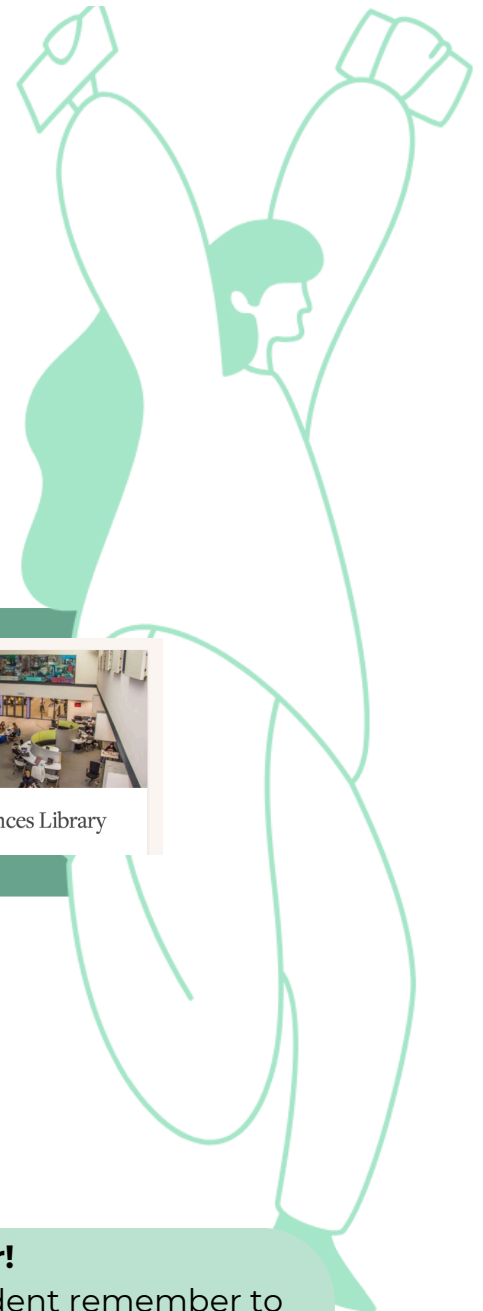
William Bragg Café

Brotherton West-Wing

Laidlaw bookable study rooms.

Remember!

If you're a joint honours student remember to check your course requirements and the demand of both of your schools FYPs to ensure that you make the best decision for you and your interests, and make sure that you meet all of your course requirements!



FINAL YEAR PROJECT

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Don't try and do your degree on your own when people are literally paid to help you!

SUPERVISORS:

- Your FYP supervisor will be your personal hero through navigating your project Plus- they are a pro so you can trust that they have this nailed and know how to help you produce a piece of work like a true academic.
- Use previous academic support! Truthfully, I am prone to looking at my grade on Minerva and shutting it straight down before taking on the criticism. No wonder I didn't know how to improve my essays... You should absolutely look through previous feedback and look for common areas of improvement.
- You can even organise a meeting with your lecturer or academic tutor to go through essay feedback with you if you are unsure

Read about mindfulness based stress reduction [here!](#)

EXTENSIONS:

- Take extensions when you need them. Nobody's life just consists of uni... life gets in the way and can throw real curveballs at us sometimes. Applying for mitigating circumstances when you need it does not mean that you're under-performing, take it when you need it!
- ~~You can apply for an extension~~ [HERE!](#)

IMPOSTER SYNDROME:

- Undertaking the final year project can feel like such an overwhelming task, and is like nothing you've done so far academically! Remember that everyone else is in the same boat, trust that you too will learn throughout the process and produce something to be proud of!

SKILLS@LIBRARY

- Did you know that Skills@Library offer a load of resources, supporting your diss: **The Final Chapter!** It covers choosing your topic, doing a literature review, structuring your work and critical thinking. You can also watch videos of staff and students from the University of Leeds sharing their top tips for success. They recommend dipping in and out of the Final Chapter, rather than working through it all in one go.

SEE THE FULL RANGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS'S SUPPORT SERVICES [HERE!](#)

FINAL YEAR PROJECT

PASTORAL SUPPORT

AHC WELLBEING:

- The [AHC Wellbeing Project](#) creates a monthly newsletter, and bi-monthly podcast focusing on various aspects of university life. There is also a weekly wellbeing café held in [Helix](#) Wednesdays 12-2pm.
- AHC [Student Advisory board](#) amplifies the voices of students from specific communities and/or equality groups to enhance AHC understanding of barriers to student success.

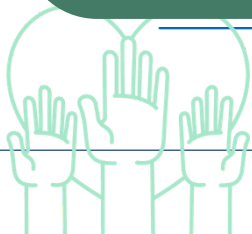
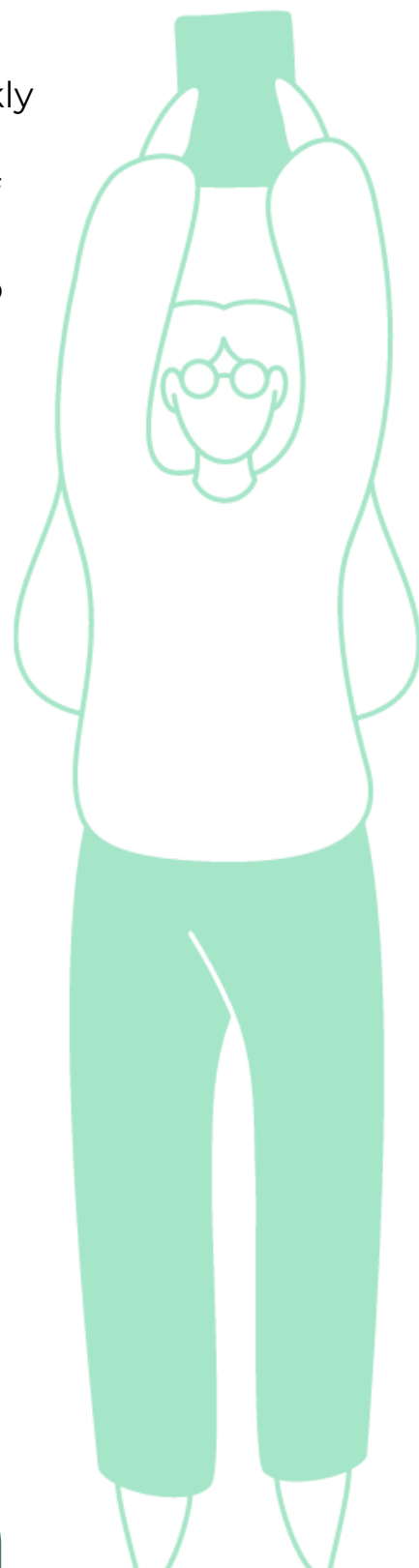
SEE THE FULL RANGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS'S SUPPORT SERVICES [HERE!](#)

UNIVERSITY WIDE WELLBEING:

- Mental health is super important and you should include lots of time to rest, socialise and allocate time for self-care. University offers so many resources to help you get through tough times though, so make sure to use them! • Bullying sadly isn't left in primary school and is a real life issue at university so take it seriously and use the ['report and support'](#) feature on the university website. This can be used in any instance of harassment or abuse, including bullying.
- There are also further points of contact for support surrounding harassment and support [here](#).
- See the counselling support available for FREE through student support services linked [here](#).

Whilst this [book](#) is based on the American college system, it offers much universal, practical advice for university students!

Read an article about undergraduate mental health [here!](#)



TOP TIPS FOR FINAL YEAR PROJECTS (FROM STUDENTS THEMSELVES!):

- 1) “- Start early! (Everyone says this and there’s a reason for it)
- 2) Make use of your supervisor often for help.
- 3) Be open to it changing across the year, what you hand in in May is unlikely to look like what you initially thought it would!”



Kate- Third Year studying History

- 1) “Do something you are passionate about, I focused on a personal event in my FYP and this enabled me to remain interested in the topic.
- 2) Don’t over complicate it - keep it simple by focusing on one specific interest. By doing so, I was able to streamline my research.
- 3) Use your personal tutor and supervisor - engage with previous lectures and speak to staff, they helped me so much in finding literature”

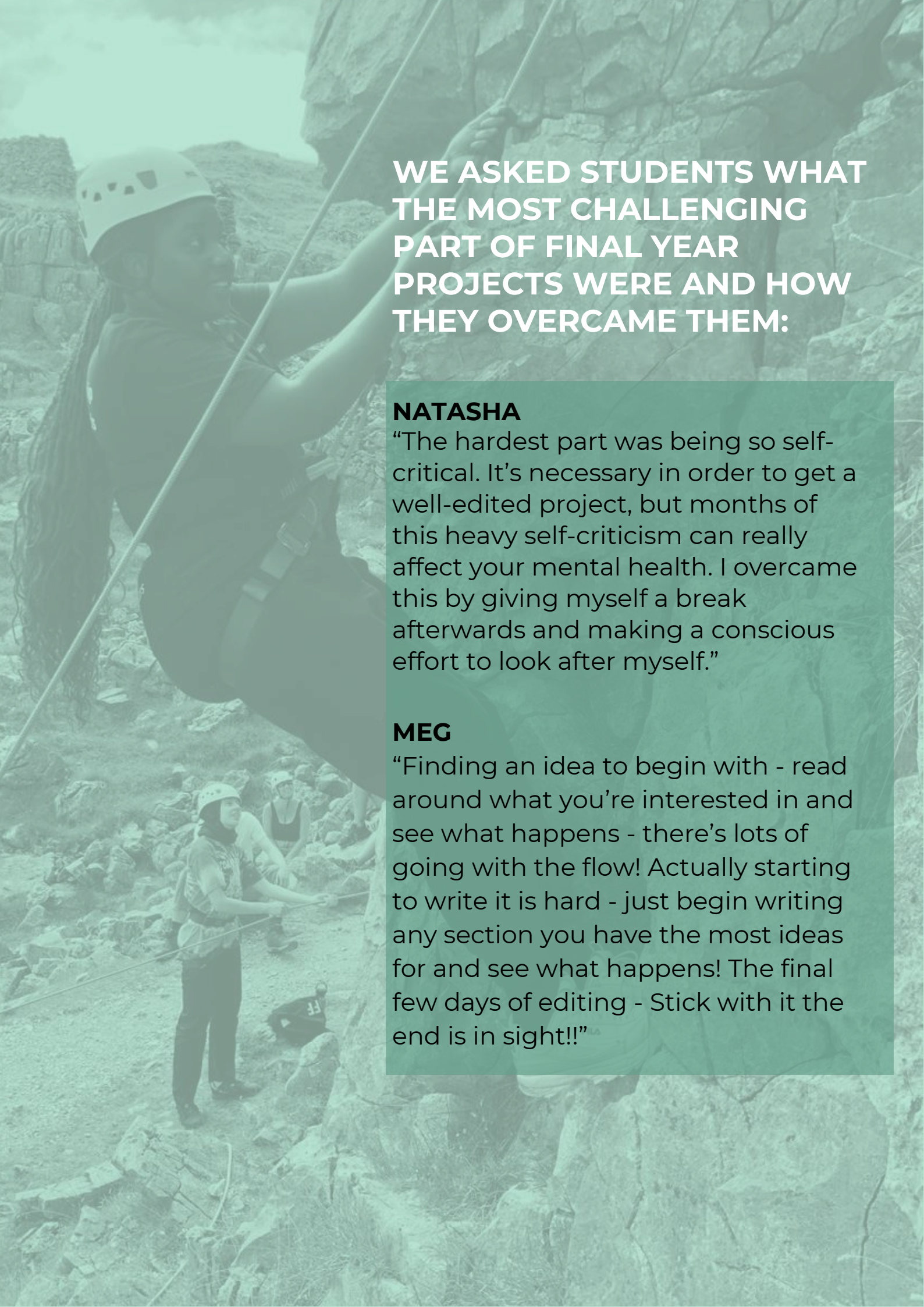


Soph- Third Year studying Theology and Religious Studies

Academically Third Year will most likely be your toughest year yet, and sometimes a silent study is a necessity, not just a preference.

See the full list of study spaces on campus [here](#)!

Silent study spaces can be found in [Brotherton](#), [Edward Boyle](#) and [Laidlaw](#).

A person wearing a helmet and harness is rappelling down a steep rock face. Below them, two other people are on the ground, one holding a rope. The background shows a rocky landscape under a cloudy sky.

WE ASKED STUDENTS WHAT THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF FINAL YEAR PROJECTS WERE AND HOW THEY OVERCAME THEM:

NATASHA

“The hardest part was being so self-critical. It’s necessary in order to get a well-edited project, but months of this heavy self-criticism can really affect your mental health. I overcame this by giving myself a break afterwards and making a conscious effort to look after myself.”

MEG

“Finding an idea to begin with - read around what you’re interested in and see what happens - there’s lots of going with the flow! Actually starting to write it is hard - just begin writing any section you have the most ideas for and see what happens! The final few days of editing - Stick with it the end is in sight!!”

TRANSITIONING FROM A YEAR ABROAD/YEAR IN INDUSTRY

Being away from uni for a year and then getting thrown back into third year can seem intense! Try and rebuild your old uni routines to get back into the swing of things.

Used to do a sports soc at uni? Rejoin! Used to be in Femsoc? [Get involved again](#). This is also a great way to make new friends if some of your old friends have now graduated.

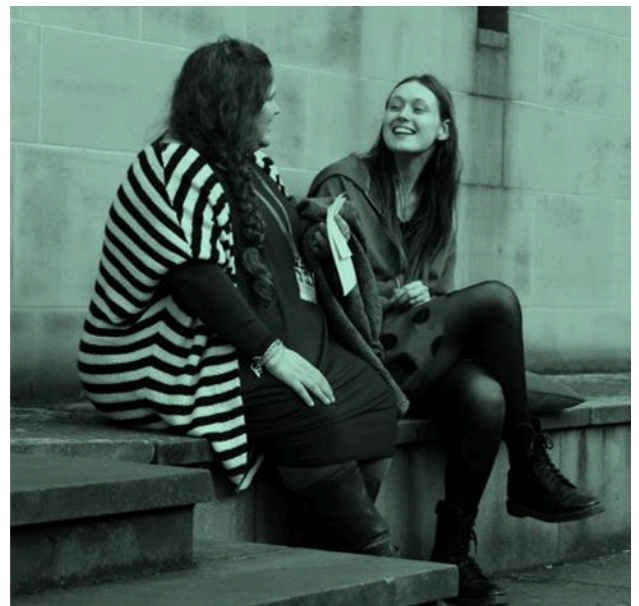
Coming back from a placement year away from your studies, or undertaking a study abroad with a completely different university style of teaching can make jumping into final year really daunting! If you are looking to brush up on your academic skills, why not access the [Skills@Library](#) resources to refamiliarize yourself with some academic writing skills or time management.

If you haven't already, join the [LSG groups on Facebook](#) to keep in the loop of all the noise complaints, flogging of club tickets and frantic housemate searching. Be for real... it's a great place to connect with the student community when you arrive back in Leeds though.

Moving back to university after a year out can be particularly difficult if many of your friends and much of your community and support network have now graduated and left Leeds. The [Buddy Scheme](#) provides support with rebuilding your community and finding new friends to help you get through final year!

If you've been working for a year it's also good to bear in mind that your finances are going to look a little different in your final year! Remember that budgeting now needs to be done in line with three student loan payments rather than that monthly wage!

For money tips, check out the Martin Lewis "Money Saving Expert" [website](#)!



MILLY DID A YEAR ABROAD AND CAME BACK TO LEEDS TO COMPLETE HER THIRD YEAR IN THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES!



HERE ARE HER TOP TRANSITIONING TIPS:

“1) Remain curious - most of us ask more questions and go on more day trips to new places when we’re on our year abroad. It’s tempting to return to Leeds and to just slump back into that freshers’ rut (night out, Uni work, night out, repeat) but actually Leeds and its surrounding areas have rich histories, diverse religious groups, natural beauty, political issues, and more - whatever it was that piqued your interest abroad is probably up for developing further in/around Leeds

2) Book office hours with your personal tutor on your first week back and let them know you’ve been away/probably forgotten how to write and reference a Leeds essay hahah

3) Journal! Your friends won’t wanna constantly hear about your adventures overseas, and it’s tricky to ask specific questions - “did you have a good time?” sometimes doesn’t lead anywhere beyond a polite one-liner response. So, keep your memories alive by writing them down.”

POST GRAD OPTIONS



Scary stuff... the big wide world, or prolonging the student life in a **Masters**. AHC students go into the most diverse fields and don't necessarily have a strict road to progression like medicine for a doctor. However, this makes AHC subjects super exciting as there are endless possibilities to be explored (remember that the **Civil Service Fast Stream** isn't the only option)! So... what are you waiting for? Get exploring. On MyCareer, you will find the official launch of the '**Class of 2025**' campaign which includes a series of interactive activities to get you thinking about next steps for post-grad.

GRAD SCHEMES

STARTING OUT

What even is a grad-scheme? Competitive career catalysts! They train you on the job, require usually A degree of some sort, offer competitive salaries and kick start your career.

- Where to start? Why not **book a careers center appointment** with the EPAs who can discuss possible pathways.
- The **Bright Network** is a great place to look for grad-schemes. It monitors deadlines, filters grad-schemes tailored to your degree or field of interest.
- See the **Top 100 graduate employers** list here!
- See the **UK 300** for graduate insights on companies and grad schemes!

TOP TIP!

Having an up-to-date **LinkedIn** can help you stand out to employers and can be something you can link to in your CV and other applications!

EXTRA TOP TIP!

Use the AI powered **LinkedIn checker** (that's available to all Leeds students!) to make sure your profile hits all the right marks!



POST GRAD OPTIONS- GRAD SCHEMES

PREPARATION

- Grad-schemes often involve cognitive ability tests and psychometric tests to narrow down applicants. Practice these on websites such as [Assessment Day](#), [Graduates First](#) and through [MyCareers](#).
- Sign up to the [AHC Employability newsletter](#) and check out their [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).. It is super useful to have visuals on the career boosting opportunities available. These include (but are not limited to): [AHC Creative Life Stories](#) (a project aimed at helping more people from disadvantaged backgrounds into the Cultural and Creative Industries), AHC [buddy](#) and [peer mentoring](#) schemes and joining the [AHC Student Advisory board](#).

REMEMBER!! Graduate schemes are competitive and you will face a lot of rejection. This is totally normal and if you keep your options open you will find something.

CV

- Grad schemes tend to start opening from October onwards so keep a keen eye out on opening dates and have your CV at the ready!
- Build your CV early on in third year so you have it at the ready to send off. University pays for a CV checker which gives you INSTANT and FREE feedback to get your CV in tip-top shape. You can find this [here](#)!
- Once your CV scores above 70, you can [book an appointment on MyCareer](#) with a specialist to check it over with you and give additional support.

For a full list of the available Career Service support services see [here](#)!



POST GRAD OPTIONS- MASTERS

We get it... you don't want to quit the student life. With **300 different Masters degrees**, you've definitely got options here. Masters are a great option to explore and if you do it here at UOL you get **10% off**- classic student discount but this time it equates to about 1k discount! Hard to turn down? Check out more information on Masters' funding [here](#).

- Alternatively, check out what other Universities are offering and what funding might be available in the form of scholarships etc.
- One thing to consider with a Masters degree is the **difference in funding**, as you receive one bulk sum rather than regular maintenance and "unseen" tuition loans. Some students work around this by taking a year out and saving up, or working part time alongside studies.
- Another difference to note is that a Masters is a whole year long (September to September), not just September to June.
- Masters applications open in October for the following academic year. **Scholarships** open on specific dates which change depending on the school.

POST GRAD OPTIONS- TEACHER TRAINING

Teaching is a popular and in-demand route to take post-grad, especially by AHC students. Here are a few ways you can get on track to be a full-blown teacher.

- Apply from October for post-grad teacher training courses.
- **PGCEs** are a one -year course through the government that award you a qualification to become eligible to apply to teacher positions.
- Other routes include **Teach First** and other two- year courses that are paid positions and also award a viable certification to become a teacher.
- It is also worth noting that sought after teaching positions sometimes offer a really attractive **bursary** that can be worth up to thousands!
- Find out more at the **Get into Teaching** and the **Find a Teacher Training Course** government websites.



OTHER POST-GRAD OPTIONS

- Maybe you've always wanted to travel, and you want a year out to go do some exploring. Or maybe you just want a year out full stop.
- Many students secure some kind of casual work after third year until they find something more suited to them. Here's some questions to consider:
 - Why are you taking time out?
 - What do you want to achieve in this time out?
 - How far in advance should you be planning to take a year out?
 - Can you afford to take a year out or will this involve an income?



- 
- All in all, everyone will be taking completely different routes. So, avoid comparing your pathways for post-grad to what others have lined up.
 - As much as thinking about the future in terms of careers is important, third year is a time to come to terms with the impermanence of university and the big changes ahead.
 - It is all very exciting things to come though!! Just don't forget to say a goodbye to friends and [order a graduation gown.](#)

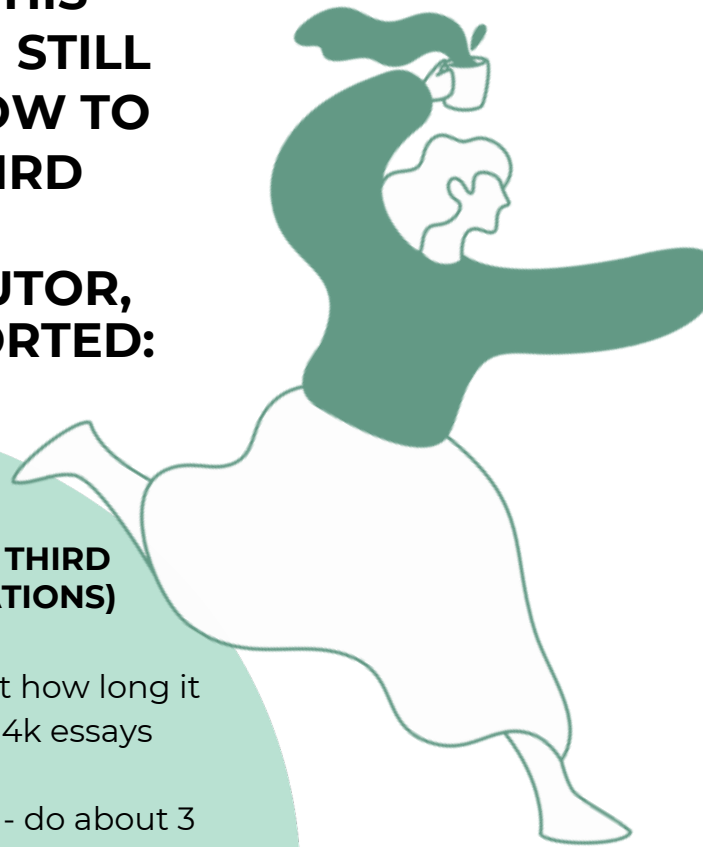
POST GRAD OPTIONS: ADVICE

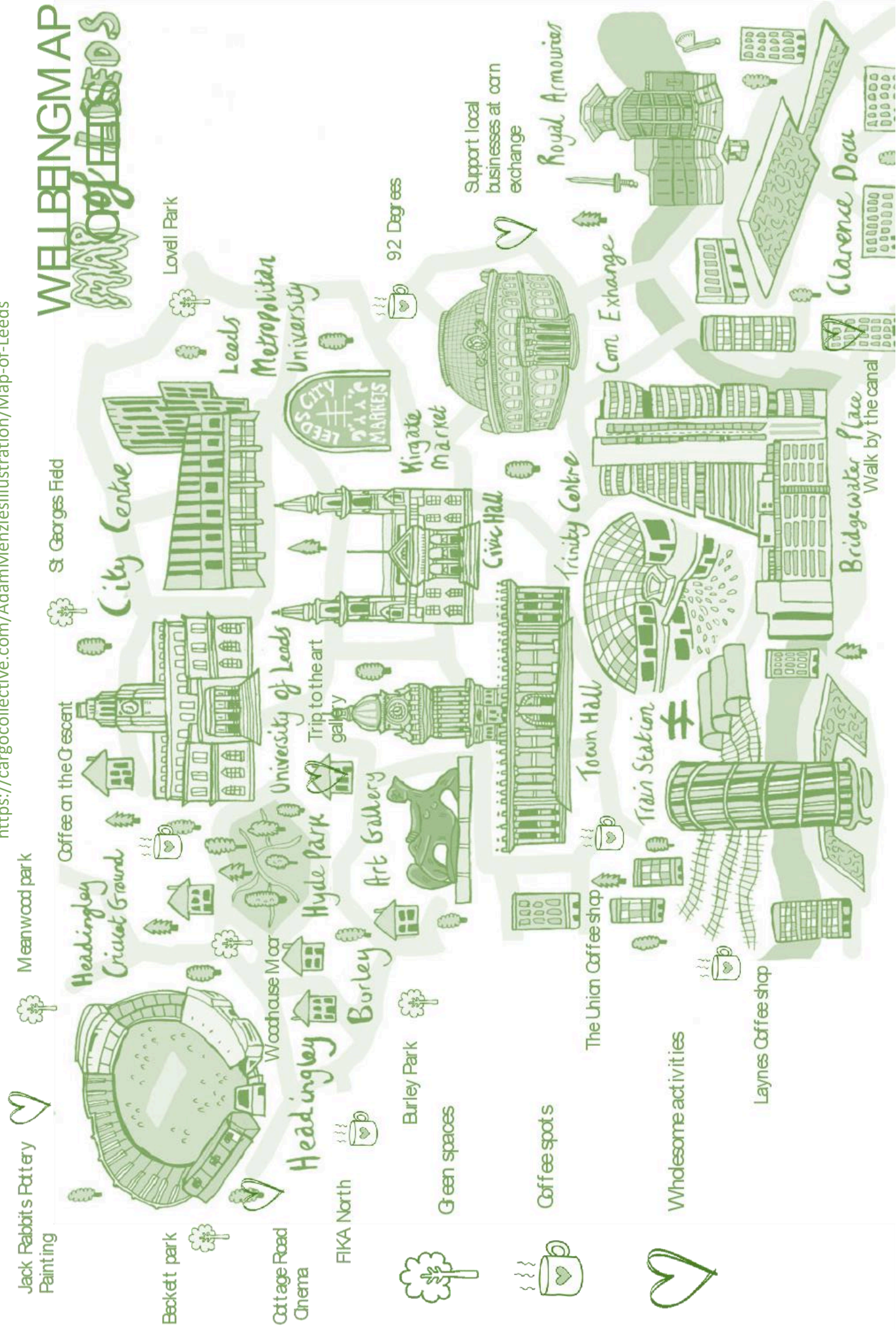
- Post-grad searching can be hard! Student testimonials cover the challenges of coping with rejection from jobs, lengthy application processes and the difficulty of balancing work experience around your degree.
- However, in order to overcome this, they have accessed AHC spaces such as [AHC Employability](#), [AHC Wellbeing Project](#) and [AHC](#) specific opportunities such as internships.

**IF YOU'VE REACHED
THE END OF THIS
GUIDE AND YOU STILL
ARE UNSURE HOW TO
THRIVE IN THIRD
YEAR...
CAROLINE, A TUTOR,
HAS GOT YOU SORTED:**

**CAROLINE'S 10 TOP TIPS FOR THIRD
YEAR: (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)**

- 1) Start your work early!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Figure out how long it takes you to research and write 3k and 4k essays
- 2) Do not leave your essays last minute - do about 3 hours each day, get it done slowly
- 3) Tackling long essays: divide the word count into sections. Do not!!! try to do it all at once
- 4) Give yourself enough time to contact your module leader or seminar tutor if you need some guidance for structure or arguments within an essay
- 5) If you get caught up in assignments: remember that your life does not revolve around academics and your worth is not based on grades or numbers
- 6) Taking breaks is productive - take a shower, have a good breakfast, evening run, spending time out in nature
- 7) Practice mindfulness - you will manage stress and obstacles with 10x more clarity and grace if you take care of your mind
- 8) Nurturing your social life: make time to hang out with friends (get some coffee or even a study session)
- 9) Attend career fairs and fairs that pique your interest, you might meet someone that can give you new ideas and guidance for future jobs





Got Feedback?

Let Us Know How We Can
Improve Our Guides For You!

