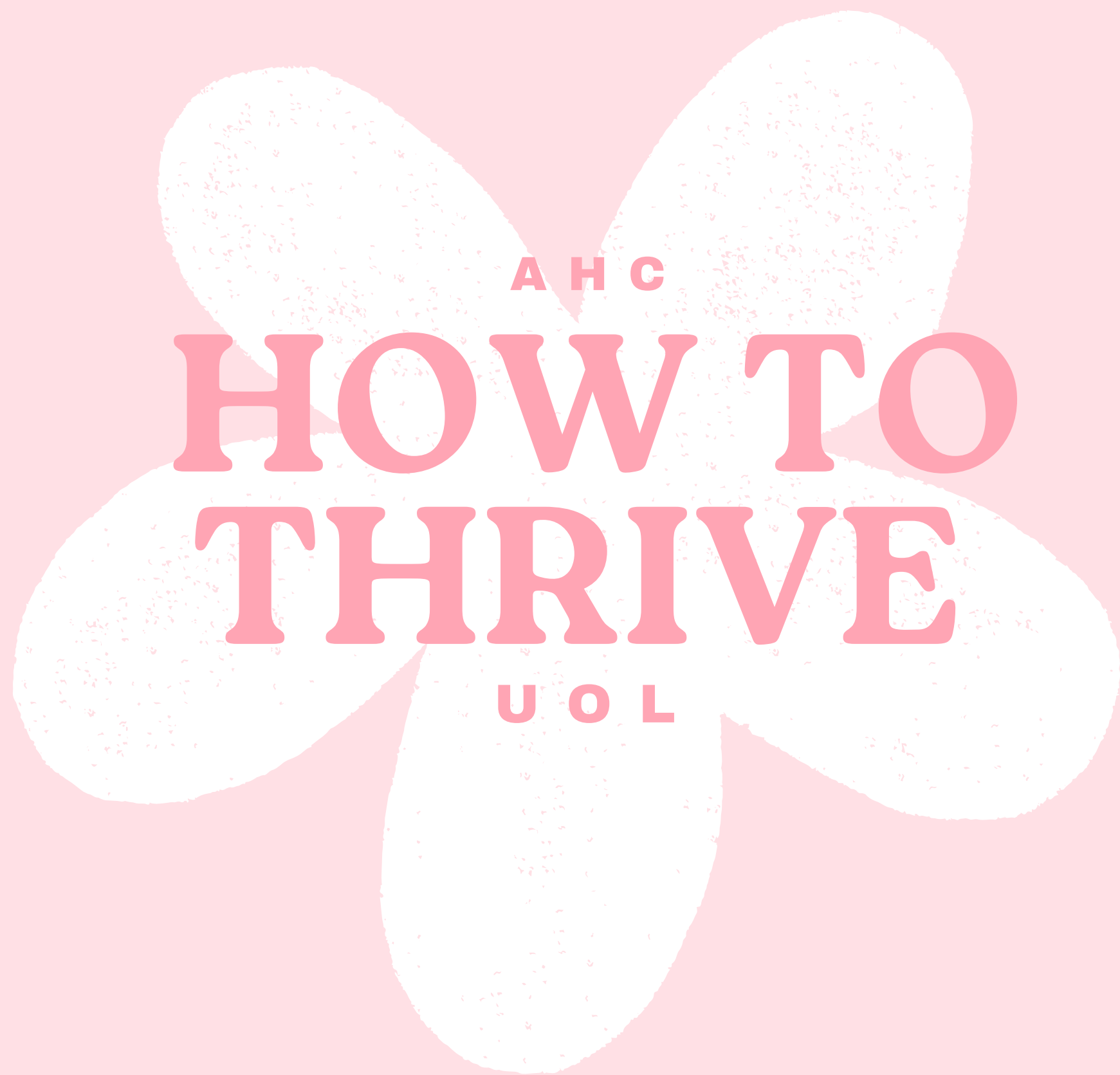




A H C

HOW TO THRIVE

U O L

Postgraduate Taught

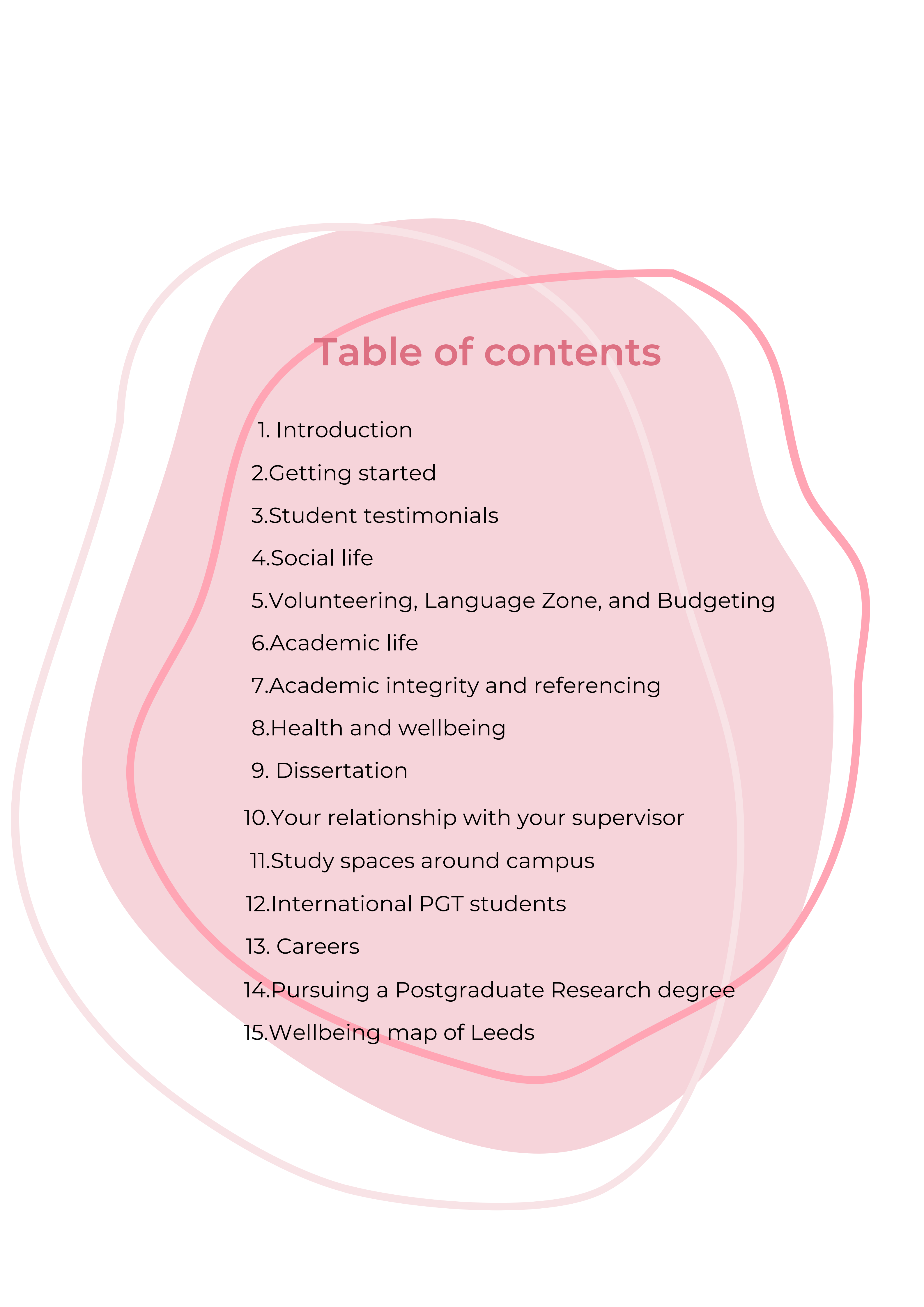


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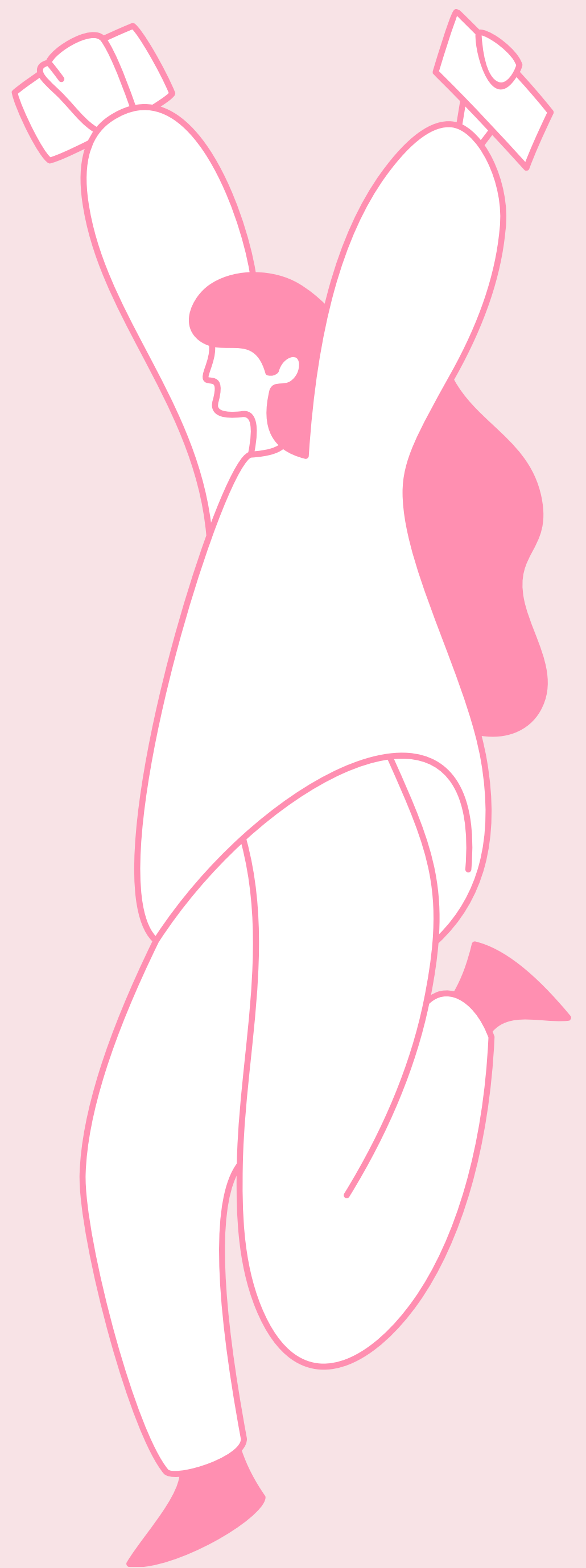
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Introduction

Hello! I am Palak and I am a postgraduate taught student, studying English Literature here at the University of Leeds. I am also one of the AHC interns working on the 'How to Thrive Guides' project. My guide will be focusing on how to thrive as a postgraduate taught student.

The decision to pursue a postgraduate degree is a difficult one! You could be worried about going back to university, continuing university over getting a job, financial constraints, among many more. So, congratulations for overcoming these challenges! Pursuing a postgraduate degree can be an enriching experience, where you get to study about your field in depth.

This guide contains information that will help you in your university life. Topics like academic life, health and wellbeing, careers and future options, and social life are covered to help you in this journey. All the Best!



We welcome feedback!

Please share any comments, amendments or suggestions you have about our guides.

<https://forms.office.com/e/n5KuG8w5t5>

Getting started

Entering a postgraduate environment can be difficult. You could be coming into postgraduate studies straight from your undergraduate degree or you could be returning to university after a break. Whichever may be the case, pursuing a postgraduate degree can be an exciting time and offers many opportunities.



A good place to start is going through the **AHC Student Handbook**. This will provide information about registration, module enrolment, attendance, making changes, academic integrity, campus map, safety and much more. It is a one-stop page for the support and links that you might need during your studies. You can access the handbook here: <https://leeds365.sharepoint.com/sites/AHC-StudentHandbook/SitePages/HomePage.aspx>

Studying a postgraduate course at university can be very different from your previous experience of academic life. The course is shorter, usually one year (unless you are studying part-time), and there is a greater emphasis on independent study and research.

Being a part of university life again can also feel a bit alienating as you have previously gone through a similar stage. Think of this as an opportunity to experience university life to the fullest once again! You could do things you were not able to during your undergraduate studies and make the most of your student life again.

Student testimonials



It will take a while to adapt to a totally different educational system and your syllabus will definitely differ too, but it will be as fun as it is challenging. You don't need to fret over it too much!

Madhulika
AHC Postgraduate Taught Student

Focus more on managing time and having a proper schedule. This is especially important to effectively manage part-time work, other hobbies and activities with the course work.

Samuel
AHC Postgraduate Taught Student



Social life

Postgraduate studies are strenuous and due to the short duration of the course, you might feel that you don't have enough time to socialise. Having a social circle can help immensely in taking your mind off work and hang out with people you feel comfortable around. Take out the time to go out and meet new people. The best way to do that at the start of the year is Fresher's Week.

There will be a host of events during Fresher's Week that you could attend as per your interests which would give you the opportunity to meet new people and make some friends.

Weekly Postgraduate Café

is also run at the Pyramid Canteen at LUU every Tuesday from 10 am to 12pm. It is a great way to meet fellow postgraduate students and make new friends while enjoying some free coffee and biscuits.

Interconnections

Interconnections is a project solely for the postgraduate students in AHC which creates spaces to meet and make friends with other students in the faculty. They organise trips, events inside and outside the campus. These social and cultural events are great to meet new people and relax while doing some fun activities.

https://www.instagram.com/ahc_interconnections/

Societies

The University of Leeds has over 300 societies that you could join to pursue your interests or try something new while at university. Societies run GIAGs (Give it a Go) which are a great way to know what the society does, how it is run, and understand if it is the right fit for you. The list of societies at the university can be found here: <https://engage.luu.org.uk/groups>



You can also sign up for the **University's Buddy Scheme**, which assigns you a buddy based on the information you provide while signing up. There is also a **AHC specific Buddy Scheme**, run for the students of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Cultures. Buddy Schemes are a great way to meet new people, network, and expand your circle.

Information about the University of Leeds Buddy Scheme can be found here:

<https://students.leeds.ac.uk/universitybuddy>

Volunteering

- Volunteering is a great way to get involved in your community, meet new people and work for a cause close to your heart. It is also a great addition to your CV!
- Browse through **MyCareers** to find volunteering opportunities. You can also join the volunteering societies at the university. The volunteering hub hosts information about volunteering opportunities in Leeds. <https://mycareer.leeds.ac.uk/student/placements.html?execution=e1s1>
- The **‘Students and Societies into Schools’** program is a great way to make a difference by running workshops and extra-curricular activities in local schools.

The Language Zone

Language Zone, situated in the Parkinson Building provides free resources to learn a new language. Learning material is available in more than 50 languages. They also organise events regularly. It can be a great hobby and you can develop a new skill. More information can be found here: <https://leeds365.sharepoint.com/sites/TheLanguageZone>



Budgeting

- Managing your finances is a tricky but crucial element of student life.
- Make a list of your incomes and essential expenses to figure out how much money you can afford to spend on other stuff.
- You can also make use of **student discounts** offered by a lot of stores and eateries.
- Use the **Unidays** app to find out student deals and discounts.
- You can also save on travel by getting **rail and bus cards** offered by many public transport services.

Academic life

Pursuing a master's degree is a step-up from the undergraduate level of studies. While it can seem overwhelming and stressful, there is a lot of support available that you can use to navigate your academic journey.

Plan ahead

Familiarise yourself with Minerva, your modules, and the reading list to better plan your semester. The workload for a postgraduate degree can be daunting from the beginning but planning your time will help you avoid working till the last minute.

Academic personal tutor

Talk to your academic personal tutor. Your tutor can help you with any doubts you have regarding your studies and even your career plans. They can also guide you towards relevant resources according to your needs or just support you in adjusting to university life.

Academic writing and discussion workshops

are also run by the Language Centre that can help you tackle any issues you have regarding your academic writing. If you feel that you need a refresher to get back into university life, or how to write essays at the postgraduate level, these sessions can be extremely helpful.

Skills @ Library

All the relevant resources related to academic writing, assessments, referencing, editing, and many more can be found here:
<https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1401/academic-skills>

Step Up to Masters

It is a great resource to develop your academic skills, learn more about the expectations from a master's degree, and improve your confidence about your academic journey. You can find information about it here:
<https://resources.library.leeds.ac.uk/step-up-to-masters/>

Learning curve

The passing grade for a postgraduate degree is 50, as opposed to 40 for an undergraduate degree.

Academic integrity and referencing



Academic Integrity is taken very seriously by the university. Make sure you complete the academic integrity tutorial and test on Minerva and familiarise yourself with the dos and don'ts of academic conduct. Different schools use different styles of referencing, the details of which can be found here: <https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1402/referencing/49/find-your-schools-referencing-style>

Information about referencing and referencing guides is also provided by the library which is a great starting point to get acquainted or reacquainted with referencing. <https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1402/referencing>

As a postgraduate student, you are going to be reading a lot of information and it is very easy to forget, get confused, and present others' ideas as your own.

Make sure to keep neat and clear notes about the information you are reading, where you found it from, whether it is a direct quote or not, to make sure that you do not breach the university's guidelines for academic integrity.

Keep an eye out for the referencing workshops held by the university. These can be very useful if you are confused about referencing, are working with a new referencing style, or just need a refresher.



Health and wellbeing

- It is very easy to get too consumed by the work and ignore your health. Eating well and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is key to successful academic life. Prioritise your health just like you would your studies. With a quick internet search, you can find several **student friendly recipes**, which are less time-consuming and easy on the pockets.

AHC Wellbeing Project

- The AHC Wellbeing Project organises events such as workshops, outdoor sessions, knitting, painting and many more. They also run a podcast, all of which you can participate in for a well-needed break.
<https://www.instagram.com/ahcwellbeing/?hl=en>
- Find out time for yourself and your hobbies. You can attend the **AHC Wellbeing Cafe**, organised weekly, that allows you to come in, meet new people, take part in activities.

Wellbeing sessions

- LUU also organises regular wellbeing sessions in the union. Classes include yoga, pilates, meditation among more. These are free classes and are open to students of all abilities.

Gym and fitness

- If you are living in a university accommodation, you have free off-peak access to Edge. You also have the option to upgrade your membership. You can also attend the exercise classes available at Edge.
- Going to the gym might not be for everyone. You can also take walks, cycle, and enjoy the outdoors as per your convenience.

Counselling services

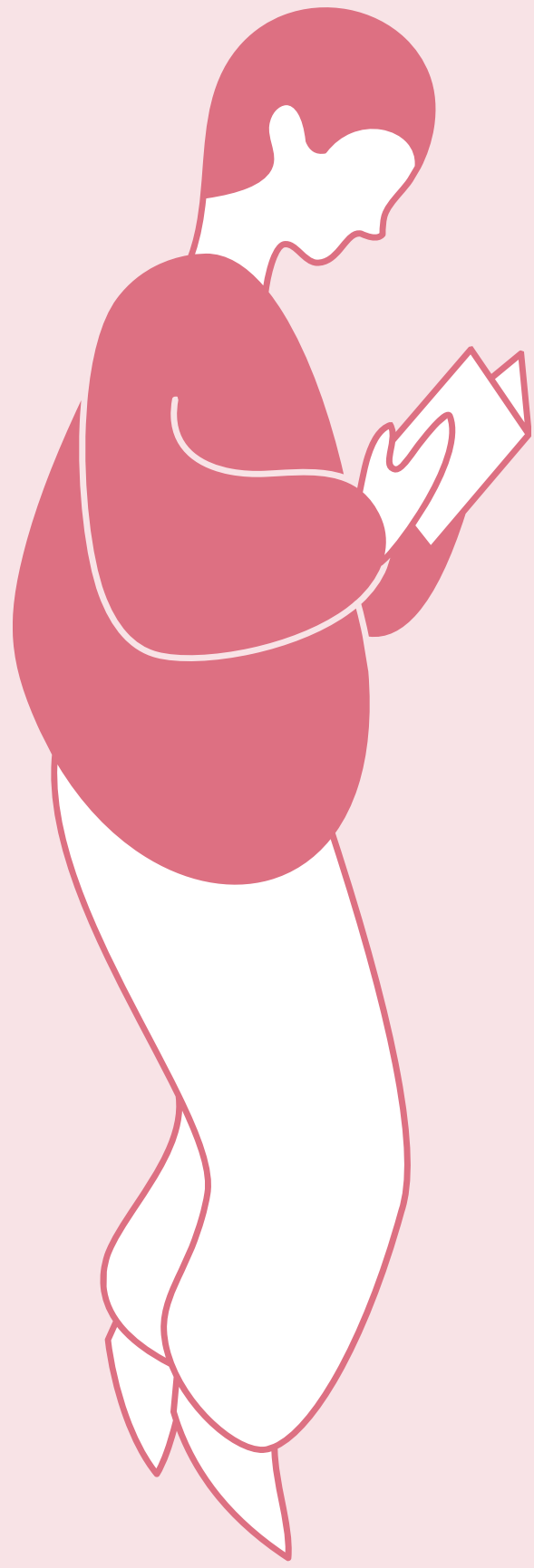
- If you feel like you need some help and guidance from a professional to manage your mental wellbeing, the University provides the students with free wellbeing and counselling services. You can either make an appointment or just drop in between 9am to 5pm. More information can be found here:
<https://students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing>
- **Nightline service** is also available for the students between 8pm to 8am on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Access the website here:
<https://leeds.nightline.ac.uk/>

Take care of your mental health! The university offers pet therapy! If you ever feel stressed, try to relax, take some time to yourself. LUU also offers wellbeing sessions. If you ever feel stressed, know that there are a ton of resources available. Be around people you can talk to.

Sanika
MA English Literature student

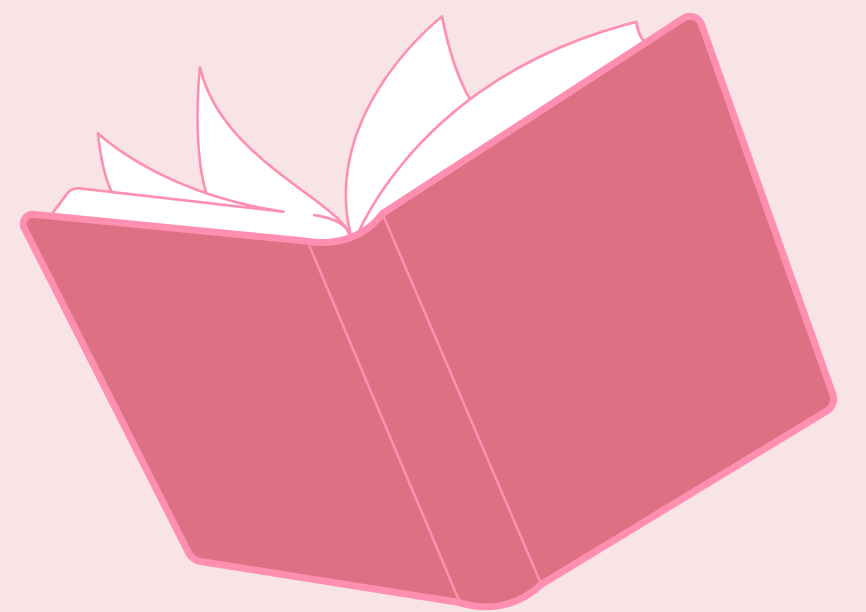


Dissertation



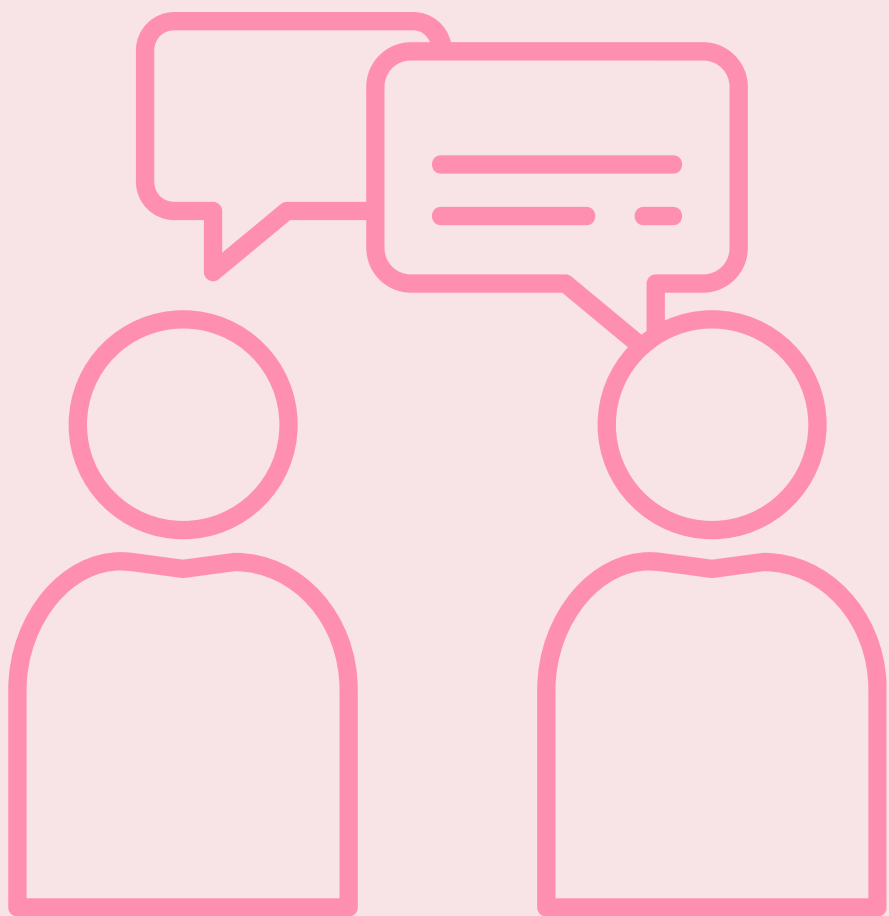
- It is never too early to start thinking about your final dissertation. The task of writing a dissertation seems intimidating, but it is also an opportunity to conduct independent research on a topic of your choice.
- Read extensively and adventurously! Reading about a variety of topics will give you a better idea of what is out there in the field and introduce you to unfamiliar ideas. You might stumble across something that might interests you so don't limit your reading choices.

- Don't choose your dissertation topic just because you believe it is what you are supposed to write. You can be as creative as you want! You are going to be working on your dissertation for most of your degree so choose something that genuinely interests you.
- You will work on your dissertations alongside your modules and other assessments. Give yourself enough time to work on both. Make a schedule, plan your week to balance both.
- At the end of the day, writing a dissertation is an independent task. It can get a bit lonely, so make good use of the libraries and study spaces around the campus.



Your relationship with your supervisor

- After you have decided on your topic, you can always discuss this with any member of the faculty from your school who is an expert in your field of choice. Just drop them an email and they will be happy to respond.
- You can also talk about your topic or concerns with your personal tutor. They will guide you about your direction of study.



- You will be assigned a supervisor based on your research proposal. It is important to make the most of the limited time you have with your supervisor.
- Your supervisor will guide you about the feasibility and scope of your project, recommend you relevant sources of information, read some of your writing, solve your doubts, and help you in structuring your dissertation.
- Since you have limited hours of supervision, it is imperative to make the most of it. Plan what you want to discuss in the meetings beforehand and give enough time to your supervisor to read your writing.

Study spaces around campus

There are a lot of study spaces around campus, which you can use to work in a more lively environment.

- You can use the **Spacefinder app** to find places to study around the campus. Using this app, you can find the place closest to your location, find out which places are currently open, and find places that match your preference for noise, facilities, and atmosphere.
- You can also always use the four libraries on campus, which provide a variety of individual and group study spaces. Libraries also provide bookable individual and group study spaces. These spaces must be booked in advance.
- **Level 13 of the Edward Boyle Library** is exclusively for postgraduate students. There are silent study spaces and options for booking individual and group study rooms.
- There are also lots of **cafes** in the campus. These include:
 1. Baines Wing Cafe
 2. Parkinson Court Cafe
 3. Esther Simpson Cafe
 4. Caffè Nerro at Laidlaw and Roger Stevens
 5. Loma Cafe
 6. The Edit Room
 7. Refectory
 8. Affine
- Outside study spaces on campus are a great way to get some time outdoors, enjoy the weather, and get some work done.



International PGT students

Moving to a new country to pursue a postgraduate taught degree can be a challenging decision. However, being an international student also provides you with the opportunity to experience a new culture, meet people from different countries, and live life independently.

While it is a memorable experience, you might feel overwhelmed with having to do so many things in the span of a year. The stress of admin and academic work can get to you, especially while navigating a completely different education system.

There is also the pressure to maintain a happening social life to enjoy your limited time in Leeds. The difference in food and climate may also get to you. Also, at the end of the day, homesickness is real.

It is important for you to realise that you are not alone. Every international student goes through a similar experience. There are student-led societies of various countries and communities that meet-up regularly, celebrate cultural events, and organise fun activities. You can always join these societies to meet people from a similar background to get a sense of home in a new country.

Make sure to ask for help. If you have any doubts regarding your classes, timetable, assignments, career, visa, you can always ask someone. It can be your module tutor, academic personal tutor, or your programme heads. If you are unsure of who to ask for help, contact the **Student Information Service** via call, email, or drop them a visit and they will guide you towards the right direction.

One of the best ways to combat homesickness is food. Cooking and eating food that you used to eat at home can make it easier for you to feel at home in a new setting. You can check out the international supermarkets in Leeds for ingredients that you might not get otherwise.

The Language Zone

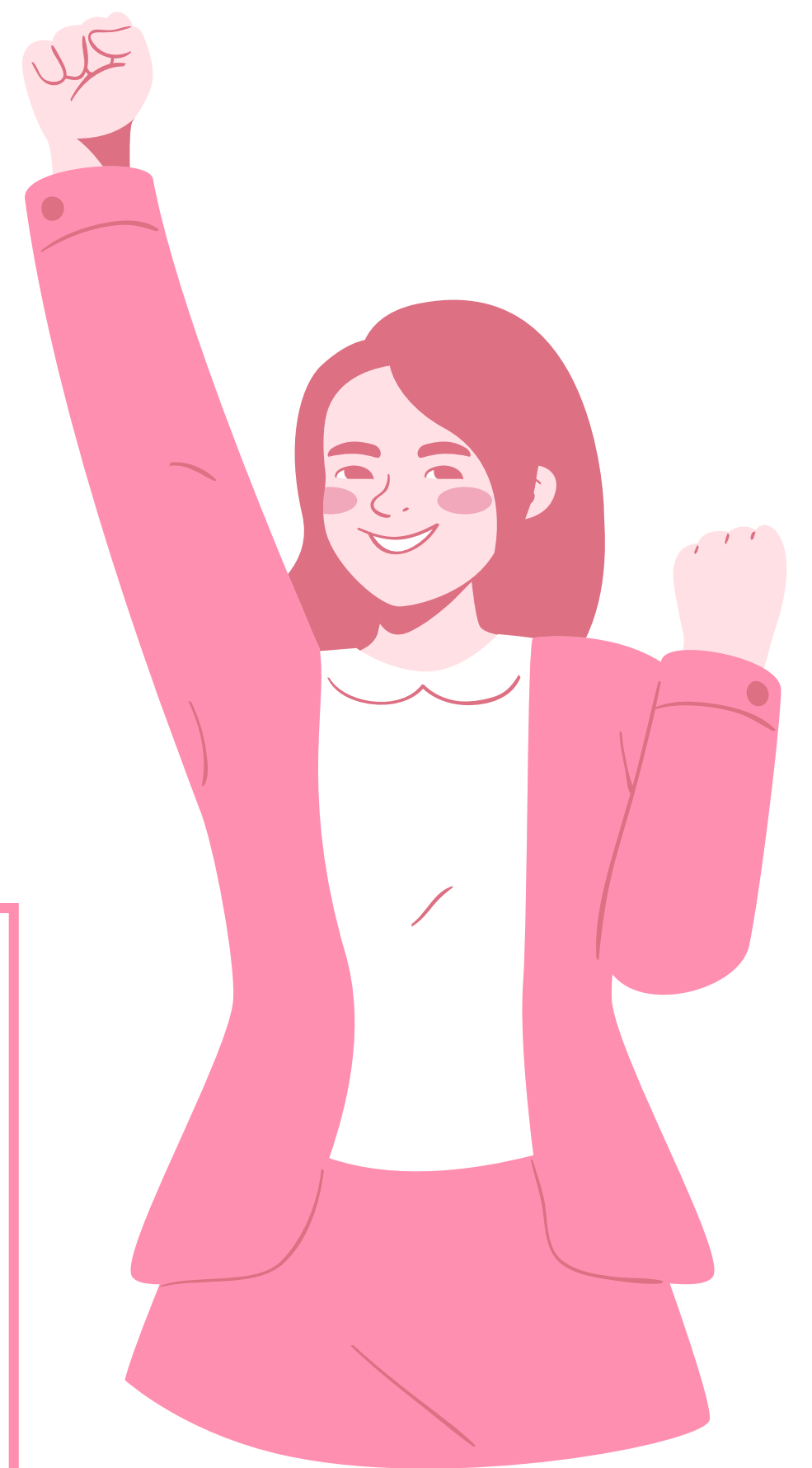
You can use the free resources provided by the Language Zone if you do not feel very confident in your English skills. It can help you in building confidence about speaking English and give you the opportunity to converse with other students to practice your language skills.

Careers

- What to do after a master's degree is a question that pesters all postgraduate students. The University provides lots of resources that you can use to create your career plan and how to go about working towards your dream careers.
- It is extremely important to work on your CV to improve your employability. You can use the **CV checker** feature available on MyCareers which will give your CV a score and also analyse your CV against your chosen job profile.
- Use **MyCareers** to get information about job vacancies, career events, volunteering opportunities, and more.
<https://mycareer.leeds.ac.uk/unauth>

Careers centre

- You can get one-on-one support from the careers centre. This can help you find the right career path and plan your steps towards your dream career.
- You can also practice giving mock interviews. This will help you gain confidence for a real-life interview. You will also receive feedback for your interview, which you can use to further practice your skills.
- If you are working on an application, you can also get guidance for writing the CV and cover letter and get it checked by the careers team.
- The careers centre offers a lot of support for PGT students. This includes a number of PGT specific events focusing on CV boosting, marketing your masters, visa sponsored jobs, and more. These events are held regularly and can be found on the MyCareers page.



- You can also apply for internship opportunities in the University of Leeds. There are also **AHC specific internship opportunities**, which could be a great addition to your CV.
- Attend **job fairs** to get to know more about the employers and roles in your field. Job and career fairs are also a great opportunity to build some networks.
- **AHC Enhancement** showcases opportunities for AHC students which can help in developing your academic and creative skills. More details about their events can be found [here: https://www.instagram.com/ahc_enhancement](https://www.instagram.com/ahc_enhancement)

- Getting more involved in the university life is also a great way to showcase and develop your skills. Join the **AHC student advisory board** to amplify the voices of students from specific communities. Keep an eye out for the deadlines for application.
- You can also run to become your **course's representative**. As a course representative, you will represent the students of your course. You will also collect feedback from the students about their learning experience and communicate the same to the faculty. Make sure to apply within the deadlines. Even if you are not the course rep, you can contact the course rep for any issues you may face during your studies.



Creative careers week

- The University of Leeds organises AHC creative careers week, which is a great platform to learn about career opportunities in the creative field, working as a freelancer, how to build your creative portfolio, and explore more career options.
- The **Creative Life Stories project** helps students get support to get into cultural and creative industries. <https://creativelifestories.leeds.ac.uk/>

Pursuing a Postgraduate Research degree

A lot of students pursue a master's degree in hopes of doing a PhD afterwards. An important consideration while making the decision is if you have any ideas that you wish to explore through research further.

Other Important considerations:

- Where to apply?
- Funding opportunities
- Research proposal
- Deadlines for application

Talk to the faculty and your tutor about your plans of going for a PhD. You can always ask for their guidance and support. They will be able to help you through the process, recommend resources, and point you towards the right direction.



WELLBEING MAP OF LEEDS

