



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

***Adapting Well: how to
manage and make the
most of your student
experience***

***A self- study resource
for all students***



Welcome

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Influencing the world since 1583

5. Building peer networks

The importance of the fifth element:

- Zhao & Kuh's (2004) analysis of the National Survey of Engagement found that **membership in learning communities** was positively associated with **gains in personal development** and general education.
- Increased interaction with peers in a learning environment promoted . . . **higher grade point average**, increased retention rates, **higher self-reported cognitive abilities**, **greater intellectual development** and greater satisfaction with college*

*Zhao and Kuh, (2004) cited in Stuart, G. S. (2008). *Making Connections: The Role of the Social Networks of First-year Students Enrolled in Learning Communities in Predicting Success in College*. Los Angeles: University of California

The importance of the fifth element:

“I remember the start of last semester, I didn't really know what I was doing and it was completely different. **I didn't know anybody so sort of I had no support network** and I was just trying to figure out how all the lectures went and tutorials and like a completely new form of teaching. **So I was a little bit lost and sometimes also lonely because I was away from my family. And it's like you kind of realize that other people are in exactly the same situation and then it's a way that you can also bond. . . it definitely started to get a lot better, like I was finding my feet”***

*International student in University of Edinburgh study on student transitions (University of Edinburgh, Internal Report, 2014)

Opportunities to build the fifth element:

Joining peer support schemes in your School:

https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/peer_learning_and_support/

Joining a University society:

<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/societies/>

Building your network through attending events e.g. workshops run by the IAD (specific events for undergraduate and postgraduates):

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/courses>

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/postgraduate/taught/courses-events>