

Academic Burnout

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What is Academic Burnout?

Academic burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by chronic stress related to prolonged periods of intense study and high academic pressure.

This prolonged stress can leave students feeling frustrated, drained, and unmotivated. Burnout negatively impacts not only academic performance but also personal well-being and daily life. Students experiencing burnout may feel detached from their studies and struggle to complete their coursework.

Although academic exhaustion is common among students, learning to recognize the signs early may help prevent serious conditions.

Recognizing the signs of Academic Burnout:

Academic burnout can manifest itself in many ways, affecting mental, emotional and physical health. Recognising these signs early on may help to prevent more serious conditions from developing.

Common signs:

- Chronic fatigue: Feeling tired all the time, even after getting enough sleep;
- Emotional exhaustion: persistent feeling of being emotionally drained;
- Disengagement: A lack of interest and motivation in studying or attending classes;
- Physical symptoms: Frequent headaches, stomachaches, or disruptions in sleep and/or appetite;
- Constant (or excessive) feeling of inadequacy or failure;
- Feelings of irritability, anxiety, or frequent sadness;
- Struggling to keep up with academic responsibilities;
- A feeling of being emotionally detached from peers, friends, or family.



What may cause Academic Burnout?

The causes of academic burnout are multiple and can vary from student to student. Some of the most common factors include:

→ **Prolonged study periods:**

Spending long hours studying the same subject or working continuously on the same project can lead to exhaustion.

→ **High expectations:**

Pressure to live up to one's own expectations or those of parents, teachers or future career can become overwhelming.

→ **Lack of balance:**

Focusing solely on studies, without making time for leisure or relaxation activities, increases the risk of burnout.

→ **Poor time management:**

A lack of effective planning and study schedules can often result in last-minute preparation, which intensifies stress and contributes to feelings of exhaustion.

What can help?

→ Organise your time

Use a diary or app to plan tasks and deadlines. Set priorities and avoid leaving everything to the last minute.

→ Take breaks

Remember that studying without taking breaks is not productive. Short, regular breaks help improve focus and productivity.

→ Get enough sleep

When students don't get enough sleep, their ability to concentrate and retain information decreases, which can lead to increased stress and a greater risk of burnout.

→ Take care of yourself

Make sure you eat healthily, get enough exercise, and make time for activities you enjoy.

→ Learn to set limits

Sometimes it is important to set your own boundaries and learn to say 'no' without feeling guilty. Prioritising activities and responsibilities can help to reduce pressure.

→ Talk about how you feel

Talking to people you trust about what you are going through can make you feel better.

For more information on health and wellbeing, follow this [*link*](#).





More information

If you feel you can't handle the situation, please do not hesitate and contact the SAS/GAA for information, specialised screening and referral.

To make an appointment for a screening interview:

E-mail: sas.gaa@iscte-iul.pt
Tel.: +351 210 464 039 ou +351 21 790 3000
(option 1 and 4)
Office hours: 9:30-12:30 and 14:30-16:30

More information



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