

Differences between school and college

In general, college is a more adult and relaxed environment than school. It's not quite so structured; no end of class bells or stairwells you can't use! You'll be treated like an adult and expected to behave like one. But, you are free to enjoy yourself too.

The people you study with won't all be the same age as you; some might even be the same age as your parents. Like you, they've decided to invest time and effort in their education, so they tend to be pretty serious about getting the most out of the course.

You'll be mixing with a much wider group of people, so there are plenty of opportunities to make new friends and join clubs, gyms and other groups.

Colleges tend to be bigger, and may have several campuses, so it can take some time to find your way around. This can be a bit intimidating at first, but colleges hold induction or welcome days, and information sessions, to help you settle in. There are a whole range of student support services you can use. And, colleges usually have better facilities for study, food, sport and leisure.

Methods of teaching might be a bit different – more practical workshops, lectures and tutorials (discussion groups).

You take more responsibility for managing your time and your course work. The taught class hours may only take place on 3 days of the week, but that doesn't mean that you don't have to do anything for the other 2 days. At college, you are expected to put in extra work and study outside of the taught classes. Lecturers and tutors won't give you constant reminders about handing in work or meeting deadlines. It's up to you to keep up with the work!

Any big change in life, like starting a new job or going to college, can be daunting at first. It does take a while to settle in. But, everyone who starts your course is feeling exactly the same way and your first day nerves will pass.