

Document name: Case studies
Document date: 2024
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OpenLearn course: Supporting adult learners' positive mental health
OpenLearn url: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/supporting-adult-learners-positive-mental-health/content-section-overview>



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Case study 1

Name: VIRAJ

Main details:

- Identifies as **male** and is in his **mid-20s**.
- Moved to the UK to study at **university**.
- Full time university **undergraduate** course.
- Few friends and no family in the UK – **Isolated, different culture**.
- **Financial** challenges.
- **Pressure to succeed** from family.
- In his **culture**, poor mental health is not discussed and is regarded as a weakness.
- Cultural reasons make admitting and talking about mental health challenges hard.
- **Exam** final assessment.
- Study motivations: to progress on to a Masters degree and return home to work in engineering.

Case study 2

Name: NICOLA

Main details:

- Identifies as **female** and is in her **early 20s**.
- Studying for a **National Diploma** course at her local **college**.
- Returning to education after a gap due to pregnancy and child-care responsibilities.
- Is a **single Mum**, living with her parents.
- Diagnosed with **mild-moderate depression** two years ago.
- Symptoms fluctuate with occasional periods of depressive episodes.
- Course work assessment.
- Study motivations: to gain a formal qualification to be able to work part time and be able to afford her own home.

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Case study 3

Name: SAM

Main details:

- Identifies as **non-binary** and in their **mid-30s**.
- Pronouns of they, them and theirs.
- Studying a **combined online and attendance-based** course.
- The course is a work-based course and funded through their employer.
- Has a diagnosis of **generalised anxiety disorder**.
- Course work and final exam assessment.
- Study motivations: to progress their career.

Case study 4

Name: JOLANTA

Main details:

- Identifies as **female** and is in her **late 50s**.
- Studying an **online degree course** and is in her second year of study.
- Recent **bereavement** of her husband.
- Has a **physical disability** affecting her mobility.
- Left school early to support family due to financial pressures, living in a **deprived area**.
- Assignment based assessment.
- Study motivations: personal achievement – no previous formal qualifications, **Low in confidence** and wants to achieve something and then to be able to volunteer in the office of the disability charity she has received support from.