

Welcome to the Freshers: A Few Guidelines to Help You

1. Building Connections and Relating Well

As you begin your journey in Obafemi Awolowo University, one of the most important things you can do is learn how to relate with others in your department. When you arrive as a fresher, take your time to observe people — especially those who are serious, focused, and active within your department. Relating with such people can help you settle down faster and get familiar with how things work. These individuals can carry you along, share vital information about lectures, deadlines, and departmental activities, and help you adapt to university life.

It is also helpful to know a few people ahead of you. Seniors and departmental leaders are often very resourceful — they have experienced what you are just about to face. For example, when I was a fresher, I received a lot of help from a departmental president who guided me in my early days. You should also try to relate with at least one or two active people who can represent you when necessary or pass important information your way. You don't need to limit your friends to people who are exactly like you. Even if you are an introvert, it's okay to have a few extroverted friends who are active and social; they can bring you useful updates and help you connect better.

2. Balancing Friendship and Focus

In your first year, it's easy to get carried away with social life, events, and new faces. However, while friendship is important, balance is key. Learn to build meaningful relationships without losing sight of your academic goals. The friends you choose can influence how you think, study, and even how you manage your time. Choose people who motivate you to grow rather than distract you. A good circle will share ideas, study together, and remind each other of upcoming tests, assignments, or deadlines.

Always remember that university life is not just about having fun or following trends — it's about building your future. So, while you enjoy your social circle, always make sure your academics remain a priority. Friendship and focus must go hand in hand.

3. The Importance of Attending Classes and Reading Smart

There's a common saying among students that attending classes doesn't really matter. But the truth is, it does. Attending lectures is crucial because hearing directly from the lecturer gives you insights that textbooks may not provide. Some lecturers emphasize specific points that often appear in exams, so missing classes might mean missing vital information.

Also, remember that attendance contributes to your scores in some courses — for example, in courses like SER, LIB, and certain departmental courses, your presence in class counts toward your total grade. Don't underestimate this.

When it comes to studying, don't read blindly. Understand what the lecturer wants. Read consciously and focus on the main points emphasized in class. It helps to go through past questions to see the kind of answers they expect. This doesn't mean ignoring your textbooks — skim through everything for general understanding, but concentrate on key areas your lecturer stressed. That's how to study smart, not just hard.

4. Isolation and Its Effects

Another common mistake freshers make is isolating themselves. While it's good to have personal time, too much isolation can affect your academic and social progress. Here's how isolation can impact you and what you should do instead:

1. ****You miss out on vital information.**** Many important announcements and updates about departmental activities, tests, or class changes are often shared informally among students. When you isolate yourself, you might miss out on these details, which can affect your performance. Always stay connected — even if it's through group chats or a few reliable friends.
2. ****You lose a support system.**** University life can be overwhelming. Having friends or coursemates you can rely on makes the journey easier. A strong support system means having people to discuss academic challenges with, share notes, and motivate each other during stressful periods. Isolation cuts you off from this support and makes the experience harder.
3. ****You miss out on social and academic opportunities.**** Beyond lectures, there are seminars, workshops, and student events that help you learn and grow. Isolated students often miss these chances to develop soft skills, meet mentors, or even network for future opportunities. Engage, participate, and explore — that's how you truly grow on campus.
4. ****You limit your mentorship access.**** Mentorship is one of the most powerful parts of university life. Seniors and departmental leaders can guide you, give you study materials, and even advise you on which courses to prioritize. By isolating yourself, you lose the chance to benefit from their wisdom and experience. Always try to relate with at least one or two seniors — their guidance can make a huge difference in your academic journey.

In summary, isolation might feel comfortable at first, but it silently limits your growth. Stay open to people, participate in departmental activities, and never hesitate to ask questions or seek help. Your relationships in school can shape your experience and even your success.

In conclusion, as you begin your academic journey, remember to balance relationships with responsibility, focus on your goals, and stay connected. The people around you, the lectures you attend, and the activities you engage in all form part of the experience that will shape your time in Obafemi Awolowo University. Welcome once again, and best wishes as you start this exciting new chapter.