

Perfectionism Check-In

A Quick Guide for Students



Striving to do well is great. But when perfectionism takes over, it can leave you feeling anxious, stuck, and disconnected from your achievements.

- ☒ Take 5 minutes to check in with yourself.
- ☒ Try out a few small changes.
- ☒ Build a healthier, happier way to succeed.

Step 1: Spot the Signs

Do any of these sound familiar? (Tick any that apply.)

- ☐ I feel extremely anxious about making mistakes.
- ☐ I delay starting or finishing tasks because they aren't "perfect" yet.
- ☐ I achieve something but feel little or no satisfaction.
- ☐ I take feedback personally, like it's a judgement.
- ☐ I tie my self-worth mainly to my academic performance.
- ☐ I'm afraid that if I'm not perfect, I'll fail completely.

Step 2: Try These Experiments

Choose one or two to try this week (tick the ones you are interested in):

Notice your self-talk:

☐ Pay attention to the way you talk to yourself while studying or working.

When you catch harsh, critical thoughts ("This isn't good enough" or "I'm useless"), gently shift to kinder language:

"I'm learning and improving,"

"Mistakes are part of getting better."

Support yourself the way you would support a friend.

Define “good enough” before starting:

☐ Before you dive into a task, take 1 minute to set a realistic standard.

Ask yourself:

"What would a solid, achievable effort look like for this?"

Write it down or say it out loud. It gives you a clear finish line — and reduces the chance of endless tweaking.

Set process goals:

☐ Instead of focusing only on the final result (e.g., getting a High Distinction), set a goal for **what you will do**.

Examples:

- *"I will study for two focused hours today."*
- *"I will complete the first draft, no matter how rough."*

Process goals help you build momentum and recognise effort as progress.

Finish something imperfectly:

☐ Choose a small task — an email, a discussion post, a practice essay — and deliberately finish it to a "good enough" standard.

Submit or share it *even if you notice imperfections*.

Afterwards, reflect:

"What actually happened? Was it worse, better, or just different from what I feared?"

Reframe feedback:

☐ When you receive feedback, pause before reacting emotionally.

Tell yourself:

"This is information that can help me grow. It's not a judgment of who I am."

Look for **one helpful suggestion** you can act on. Even one small adjustment is a win.

Broaden your self-worth:

☐ Make a list of **at least three ways you contribute value** beyond academic results.

Examples:

- Being a good listener to friends
- Showing kindness to others
- Having creative ideas
- Staying curious about the world

Remind yourself: **You are many things — not just your grades.**

Reflection

Did you try any of the experiments? How did they go?

Step 3: Regularly remind yourself

- Excellence is about growth, not flawless results.
- Mistakes are part of learning, not signs of failure.
- You are more than your achievements.

Progress beats perfection, every time. 