Video transcript of our animated video, Ways to Improve Your Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is how we value and see ourselves. If it's low, it can sometimes impact the way you treat yourself, or make it harder to recognise your strengths. It can also make it feel tough for you to move past problems, try new things, or make decisions. How we see ourselves can feel like something that's hard to change, but we have some tips to help. Only try what you feel comfortable with and take things slowly.

Take care of your mental and physical health. Think about how much sleep and physical exercise you're getting, finding a balance is important. Getting too much or too little can have an impact on how you feel. Things that affect the way we feel about ourselves are different for everyone, but difficult or stressful life experiences can often impact our self-esteem. Many people find that talking to a counsellor, therapist, friends or family can help them to build their self-esteem, and tackle difficult issues. To access therapy, speak to your student support team or your GP.

Get to know yourself. Think about what makes you happy and what you value in life. It can help to write this down in a journal. You might find that you're basing your self-worth on things that aren't useful or helpful to you, especially in comparison to other people. Remember, what people choose to share about their lives isn't the full picture, so comparing yourself isn't helpful.

Recognise your strengths. Try not to put too much thought into the negatives, instead celebrate your successes and accept compliments. You could even make a note of them to look over when you're feeling low or doubting yourself.

Be kind to yourself. Challenge unkind thoughts. If you're putting yourself down, it can help to ask "Would I talk to a friend in this way?". Overstretching to please others can drain your energy and affect your wellbeing. Remember, it's ok to set boundaries. And try to get into the habit of looking after yourself or doing something kind for yourself every day. Do things you find fun like taking up a hobby, being creative, or volunteering for something you're passionate about. You could also try setting small goals such as trying a recipe, or learning the days of the week in a new language. Remember, you don't have to be perfect at something, to enjoy doing it.