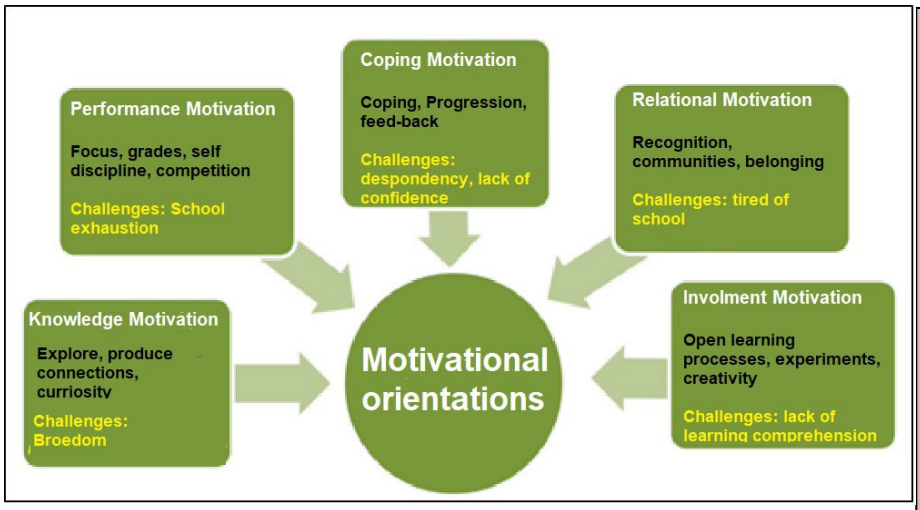
Newsletter for academic student advisors – Motivation

Now that November has arrived, so has the newsletter from the Counselling and Study Support team for academic advisors and other guidance enthusiasts. In this newsletter, we will explore a concept frequently discussed in education: motivation. But what does motivation mean, and why is it important to talk about? We won't provide an exhaustive answer (as we simply don't have the space), but we will contribute to the conversation about motivation. In this newsletter, you will find:

- An introduction to Deci and Ryan's concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- An understanding of what motivational orientations is and how you can use them in guidance



Deci and Ryan's Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Motivation researchers Deci and Ryan, as part of a broader theory of motivation, discuss the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the type of motivation that involves doing certain things because they are inherently satisfying. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, involves doing things because you can gain something from it (or avoid negative consequences). For example, a student might attend a class because it is interesting and enriching (intrinsic motivation) or because attendance is mandatory and they will fail if they do not attend (extrinsic motivation).

In guidance, it can be useful to consider what type of motivation students have for a given task. It is not wrong to be extrinsically motivated, but intrinsic motivation is more sustainable and lasts longer. However, extrinsic motivations can help get started on a task. Once engaged, one might recognize the importance of the task and thus develop intrinsic motivations.

Motivational Orientations

The motivational orientations discussed by Pless et al. provide another insight into motivation, which can be influenced by different orientations. Besides the motivating aspect of the orientation, there is also its downside; the various types of demotivation that can arise when there is a perceived lack of alignment between the opportunities in education and the individual's meaningful principles (motivation).

In guidance, it can be useful to look at the forms of demotivation expressed by the student, as this can give an idea of what is important for the student's motivation and how one might help with motivation. The model is contextual and developed with secondary education as its focal point, so it is not necessarily directly transferable to university, but it can serve as a tool for reflection and conversation in guidance.

That concludes this newsletter. We will be back in December with yet another newsletter about exams.

Best regards,

Counselling and Study Support.