Transcript of Masters Student Mental Health Awareness poster by Dr Zoe Ayres for Accessibility

This poster explores some of the common stressors that Masters students experience during their taught and/or research programmes.

Number One: Pressure to Perform. With the short nature of the Masters programme, there can be huge pressure to succeed. Being financially committed can make it harder to quit.

Number Two: Workload Intensity. The workload/research intensity is often very high adding stress master students can sometimes be used as output mills and treated poorly.

Number 2: Uncertainty. The pressure of not knowing what comes next after study, plus having to apply for jobs while still studying can be intense.

Number 4: Steep Learning Curve. With many returning to education, or transitioning from undergrad, Masters programmes are often intense and without support people can feel out of their comfort zone or overwhelmed entirely.

Number 5: Often Not Included. Conversations are around the master student experience are often few, making it difficult to validate and share storeys and find support groups.

Number 6: Juggling study/life. Often taking on a Masters alongside working and all the intensity of the programme balancing work life can be a real difficulty can be really difficult adding increased strain.

Number 7: Social Isolation. Moving to another location to study, and the intensity of workload can make it difficult to form social groups and support networks within the Masters cohort.

Number 8: “Just a Masters”. In some cases, it may be met with snobbery and statements like you are just a master student this can lead to feeling undervalued and imposter feelings

Number 9: Financial Concerns. Paying out for the Masters, moving to attend the programme and all living on a small stipend, can result in significant financial concerns.

Number 10: Systemic Issues. Instead of dealing with complaints or concerns some universities do not address them, and just wait, banking on high student turnover.

Number 11: Little Downtime. There is often little time to rest during a Masters programme, with pressure to just keep studying. This can lead to burnout.

Part of the mental health series by Dr Zoë Ayres free to distribute. With thanks masters students on #AcademicChatter for conversations.