

Prepping for university!

Dear Year 13,

I have made this document after consulting with some Russel Group universities and its aim is simple: *To help you prepare for your time at university.*

I asked the universities for (a) 5 things they wished all undergraduates came to their university knowing/able to do and (b) the top 3 pieces of advice for Year 13s during these uncertain times which will help them prepare for university.

And here's what they had to say!



- ✓ Dr Christina Malathouni: Time management would be my No. 1: there is a change of gear in University, one must make more own choices and juggle many diverse tasks.
- ✓ @LivUniLibrary: Presentations - the slides & the speaking; Time management for deadlines, learning by yourself etc; Note taking - from lectures or other sources; Reading - for assignments; Writing for the academic level.
- ✓ @LivUniKnowHow: Managing independent learning and planning ahead to meet deadlines and prioritising tasks is key! Also developing the ability to read critically and question what is being presented by a source of information.
- ✓ Student 1: How to reference!
- ✓ Student 2: I'd say life skills would be far more useful to them in that first year than getting ahead on the reading. Get them to be able to make three quick, simple meals (preferably from tinned/frozen ingredients) and learn to clean a toilet/bathroom properly.
- ✓ **Budgeting** - It is never too early to start conversations around how a student will pay their way at university. Students will receive their loans in three instalments through the academic year, so it is vitally important that they learn how to budget properly. Students should have conversations with their family/supporters now so that they understand what their income (loan, savings, part-time work, bursaries...) and outgoings will be (accommodation, travel, food, books...). Many students have part time jobs while they study so they could start looking for options before starting at university. Students can also start looking at what student bank accounts are on offer as many have benefits such as

interest free overdrafts, and free rail cards (check the small print for repayments though!) If students plan their budget right, they can focus on their studies and the fun side of university life instead!

- ✓ **Keeping up with academic work** - Students may wonder why their teachers are still setting them work to do at home. It is vital that students keep up with their studies, as universities will expect students to have a solid academic knowledge that they can build upon in the first year of their degree. If students slip behind academically now, they may struggle to cope once they start university.
- ✓ **Social media** - Most Universities will have social media accounts for students to follow so that they can get a sense of what is on offer, and where they can get advice before they arrive on campus. Academic departments and halls of residences will often have their own accounts to help students make friends, and to coordinate who is bringing the saucepans for the shared kitchen in their flat!



Durham
University

- ✓ @durham_uni: I would recommend students checking out our @thedurhamstudent Instagram channel - these are real Durham University students who post about what life is like at uni, what they wished they had known, etc.
- ✓ @durham_uni: Check out their YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCvssHjIEWKPYJ6tljnoEdQ/videos>
- ✓ Check out 'Day in life' blogs, cover many of the subjects and courses available at Durham and give a good insight into how student spend their days and balance their time, as well as lots of information on studying and academic work - <https://sites.durham.ac.uk/studentblog/>
- ✓ Carina Font, a second-year from St Mary's studying Marketing and Management: <https://sites.durham.ac.uk/studentblog/what-i-wish-id-known-before-coming-to-durham/>
- ✓ <https://sites.durham.ac.uk/studentblog/a-letter-to-my-sixth-form-self/>



Newcastle
University

- ✓ Newcastle University have made a fantastic document called "What I wish I had known": www.shorturl.at/dlvZ6
- ✓ <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/schools/resources/> - we are hosting online content for students too.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

- ✓ The following link allows you to see all the department has to offer to students virtually so please do take a look:
<https://s6.newzapp.co.uk/t/gtp/OSwxNDIzNjM1NjM5LDM=/>
- ✓ Following on from this, there will be live Q/A sessions on a variety of topics with current students, starting with student life in a few weeks.



UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

- ✓ University of Birmingham student blog: <https://life.bham.ac.uk/ug/> - content written by current students.
- ✓ Skills4uni platform helps prepare for the transition to University study and can be found at <https://www.skills4uni.bham.ac.uk>
- ✓ The benefits of higher education - <https://youtu.be/zZAANV2l0AQ>
- ✓ Writing a personal statement, hints and tips from admission tutors - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLokG6bhPCw&t=3s>
- ✓ Student finance - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbnqLZRjoAk>

MANCHESTER 1824

The University of Manchester

- ✓ Manchester suggested you browse through this site:
<https://studentnews.manchester.ac.uk/>
- ✓ A particularly useful article -
<https://studentnews.manchester.ac.uk/2020/04/23/how-to-be-productive-while-working-from-home-during-lockdown/>

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

- ✓ There are also lots of articles online for things like 'top ten things to know before starting University'. This one on Prospects.ac.uk is particularly helpful:
<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/applying-for-university/university-life/10-things-to-do-before-starting-university>
- ✓ There is a wealth of helpful content on our University website, Students Union website, and on our YouTube channel:
- ✓ <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate>

- ✓ <https://www.cardiffstudents.com/>
- ✓ <https://www.youtube.com/user/cardiffuni>

MOOCs you could sign up for:

MOOC stands for 'massive open online course'. The term originated in the US in 2008 to describe free, easily accessible, completely online courses. MOOCs give you the chance to study with top universities around the world. MOOCs don't always lead to formal qualifications, but they do mean you can gain knowledge in all sorts of areas. You might use a MOOC to develop skills, prepare for further education, or explore a new interest.

- <https://www.futurelearn.com/>
- <https://www.edx.org/>
- <https://unccelearn.org/>
- <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>