

Parents and Guardians Guide

Starting university is a big step in students' lives. It isn't just a period of change for students, it can impact the whole family. For many students it is the first time they have lived away from home, and had responsibility for themselves. This guide will provide you with relevant information, help you to understand what your new student is going through and how you can help them.

How to help

Starting university is a significant point in a student's life and we understand that you will want to help them settle in as quickly as possible.

Arriving and moving in

Welcome Weekend is the main period for moving into University accommodation. Campus and accommodation sites will be busy - make sure you know what to expect, how to get here and what date/time to arrive. Our [New Students](#) web page includes information about getting here, enrolment arrangements, how to book an enrolment and moving in slot, and what to expect in the first week.

What to expect

- Students' reactions to starting university can be quite varied. Some will take to it very easily, while others will take a bit longer to find their feet. Try not to worry too much about initial wobbles and encourage them to get involved and give themselves time to adjust.
- Remember that universities vary in the way they do things, so your son or daughter's experience at Northampton and the way things are done may vary from your own experiences of university, or that of their friends or family. Take some time to read the information available on the [Welcome website for students](#), and encourage them to ask questions if they are unsure of anything.

How you can help

Although students start university as adults, many will still depend on their parents or guardians to some extent and so you may be their first point of contact if they want to talk or need some advice. The first few weeks after a student starts university is a time of adjustment and you should expect that there will be ups and downs. Below are some hints and tips to help you help them:

- Reassure them that it may take a while before they feel completely settled, but if they are open to trying new things and exploring opportunities to meet new people, they are likely to find their niche.
- Remind them that other students are likely to be feeling just as anxious to make friends, so being as open and friendly as they would like others to be to them will help everyone settle quickly. They will most likely find others are feeling the same way and may even bond over their common experiences.
- Having a rounded university experience and [developing skills](#) is important in finding a good job after graduation. Encourage them to get involved in [clubs and societies](#) to gain these skills.
- There is a lot of [support available](#) at the University. Often when students are in the midst of a problem they don't remember this, so parents and guardians can often provide a useful prompt for them. Remind them that dealing with small issues earlier on could avoid bigger problems later.

When the University should be involved

There may be times when your son or daughter needs more specialist advice or support. You will probably be in the best position to know if their behaviour is normal for them or a cause for concern. If this is the case, you can direct them to seek help from an appropriate service.

Support for students

The University is committed to providing extensive support to students throughout their studies. As well as support provided by Personal Tutors, we have a full range of specialist support and services who offer support in many areas including academic, mental and physical health, disabilities, and general student support.

Personal Tutors

Each student at the University is allocated a personal tutor. They should be the student's first point of contact about any academic-related issue and can refer students on to other services as appropriate.

Student Support & Advice Team

The [Student Support & Advice Team](#) offer friendly, professional and confidential advice and guidance. If a student is struggling on their course, have had a change of circumstances, are experiencing life events that are affecting their ability to study, or are thinking of leaving the University, the Student Support & Advice Team can support students and guide them through the options that may be available to them. They work closely with Personal Tutors and other support services. They can signpost students towards any additional support they may require and can also help them to access these services

Residential Life team

Students living in our halls of residence are supported by our [Residential Life Team](#). If they are feeling homesick or have an issue they need help with they can talk to them in confidence, even if it's the middle of the night.

The residential life team conduct hall welcome talks where they will sit down with students and give them useful advice so that they are prepared for the year ahead. This is also an opportunity for them to get to know the team and to ask any questions that they may have.

The team also employs student Residential Life Assistants to work alongside them, offering peer support and guidance to residents living in halls.

Financial Guidance Team

The [Financial Guidance team](#) can help students with queries about the type of funding that may be available to them, difficulty managing money, or any financial concerns. The team also have a partnership with the Northampton Citizens Advice if students have a more complex debt or benefit query. The team also assess students for additional funds which may be available from the University.

Counselling & Mental Health Team

Our [Counselling and Mental Health Team](#) provide free confidential support to students in a safe space who need help in managing their emotional and mental wellbeing. The team are professionally trained Mental Health Advisers and Counsellors who provide 3 services; counselling, mental health advice and drop-in support.

ASSIST

Our [Additional Student Support and Inclusion Services Team \(ASSIST\)](#) can help students who are disabled or who have additional needs to access all aspects of university life, take control of their learning and enhance their employability skills.

Multi-Faith Centre

Operating as a part of Student Services, the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Team draws from a number of faith traditions and works for the benefit of all students – regardless of faith, belief, sexuality, or gender. Students are welcome to drop in at any time to talk, meet with others, pray or simply enjoy some quiet time.

Confidentiality and information about students' progress

You may be used to receiving information about academic progress at college or sixth form. We welcome students to the University as adults, and the Data Protection Act prevents us from sharing information about students with you or other third parties.

Therefore, although staff will be happy to provide you with general information, any specific information about the student (including how they are progressing) can only be given to

them. For information about when, and in which circumstances, we would share information please see our [Terms and Conditions](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Serious Concerns

If you have a serious concern about the student's wellbeing, please contact the Student Support & Advice Team (studentsupportofficers@northampton.ac.uk) in the first instance. Please note that University staff will not usually be able to inform you of the outcome of their investigation, but they may be able to encourage the student to contact you.

Safety on Campus

We want all our students to have the best possible university experience, so we're committed to their safety and wellbeing. We have a 24/7 University Security Team, who work closely with the University Police Team, who are here to help keep students and their possessions safe, as well as giving helpful advice on personal safety.

University Security

The [university security team](#) works 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and has a primary focus on safeguarding everyone within our campus community. The University Security Team works closely with the University Police Team.

University Police Team

The [University Police Team](#) are here to keep the university community safe. They can offer advice around any crime, safety issues or around protecting vulnerable people. The University Police Team work closely with the Security team and are available on site, seven days a week.