

# A Freshers' Guide To University

[www.proprep.uk](http://www.proprep.uk)

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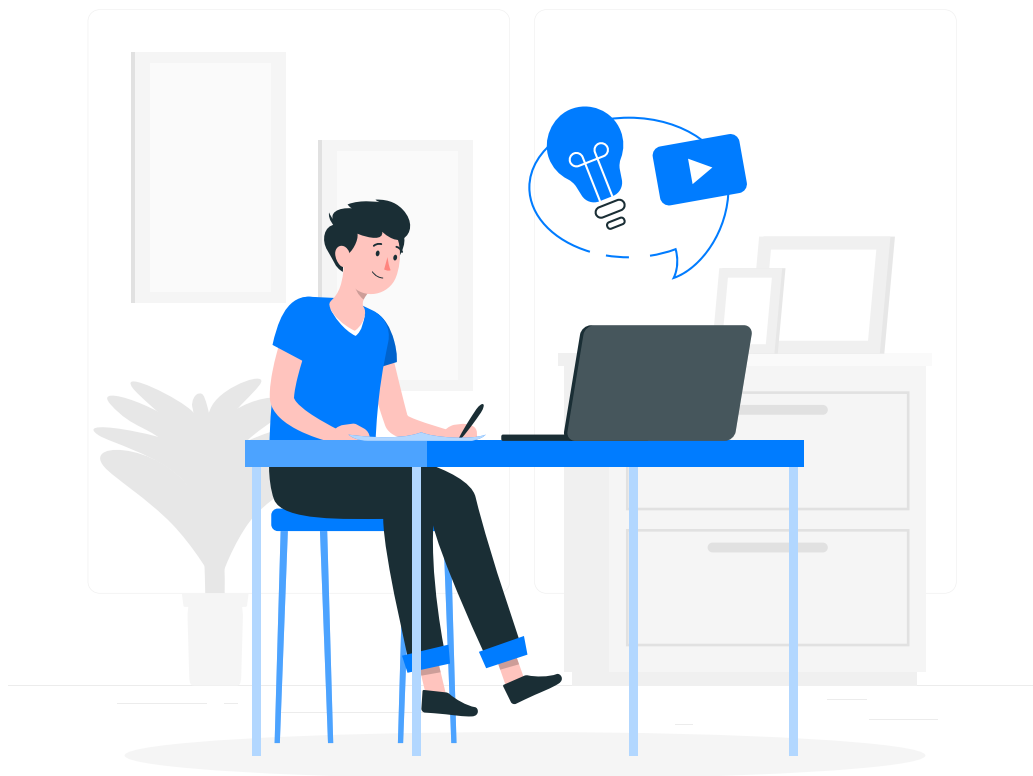
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# Introduction

At [Proprep](#) we're all about making your life easier and we know being part of the COVID cohort isn't easy, so we've created a Freshers' guide to help keep you informed and safe while living away from home. You'll find the answers to your frequently asked questions, as well as tips to make living student life easier.

[Proprep](#) is the leading online STEM video learning platform that has already helped over 500,000 students worldwide to improve their academic results at university. Our platform has over 60,000 videos that are 100% customised to the specific modules at your university. We also have 1,000s of practice questions and answers that you can use to improve your grades.

That means no filtering through generic content and lengthy textbooks with little value.



# Finances

With all the many pluses of student life there comes the inevitable cost. Tuition fees and living expenses aside, living away from home is an expensive business, especially if you aren't used to budgeting. Here are our best tips on how to be smart and savvy about your spending.

## Grab student discounts

[UNiDays](#), [Totum](#) (the new name for NUS extra) [Voucher Codes Student](#) and [Student Beans](#) all have a vast array of online and offline student discount codes for restaurants, takeaways, clothes and tech that will save you hundreds of pounds.

## Budget

It sounds dull but learning to budget both daily and weekly will stop you running out of money and borrowing more.

## Work out if a deal is a deal in the supermarket

25% more, 2 for one discounts and multipack deals aren't always the money saver you think they are especially if they're branded items so think smartly before you shop.

## Shop the bottom shelves

Supermarkets tend to stock their more expensive products at eye level. Shopping the lower shelves could save you a few pennies.

## Use [Proprep](#)

Our easy-to-use personalised system of STEM video content and study guides is customised to the specific needs of your university. We also have over 3,500 courses and 60,000 videos on offer and a vast selection of textbooks.

## Shop smartly for your bill providers

Use comparison sites as these can save you hundreds of pounds a year. And always read the small print to see how long you will be tied into deals.

## Don't forget to get a TV licence

A valid TV licence is required to watch or download any BBC programmes on BBC iPlayer, as well as watching or recording live TV on any channel.



# Student essentials

Whether you are in halls or private accommodation, on-campus or off, you will need more than you think when you start university. The trick here is to shop wisely, so you don't head off to university with the kitchen sink.



## Think about your study needs

Noise-cancelling wireless headphones are ideal when you need to block out your flatmates. A wireless printer and a good selection of stationery are also essential items you may not have on your list.



## Remember storage is vital

You will likely have a smaller living space than you do at home, so think about more hangers or extra storage drawers, or perhaps boxes you can stack in your room to help with keeping things tidy and organised.



## Bring kitchenware and bed linen

From utensils to plates, glasses and pots and pans, you need enough for at least three meals a day. Gadget wise, consider what you use at home (coffee machine, sandwich maker) and whether it's suitable for university life.



## Consider your downtime needs

There are streaming services that have great student discounts like Amazon Prime and Netflix has a free month's trial. You can also access BBC iPlayer and All4 online.



## Bring extra food

This may be the last thing on your list but it will be top of your needs once you get to halls. Make sure you have a good stock of store cupboard essentials, tea, coffee, snacks and anything you might want right away.



## Don't forget household necessities

The last thing you'll want to do when you arrive is go shopping so think shower gel, shampoo, laundry detergent, bin bags, washing up liquid, toothpaste and toilet roll.

# COVID Restrictions at University

The rules of social distancing are continually changing (the rule of six didn't exist when we started writing this article) so **always check with local guidelines and national guidelines for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as they differ in each country and in some local areas too.**

In light of COVID-19, all universities will be seeking to limit risks to students by applying government guidelines. Expect changes to your course, and traditional campus life at least for the autumn term.

**Be ready for multi-mode delivery.** Teaching will be a combination of on-campus in-person learning and remote learning to ensure contact time doesn't decrease. This decision means larger-scale lectures that previously involved 30+ students will now be virtual. However, small-group seminars and tutor groups that are face-to-face will be going ahead.

**Adhere to the social Rule of Six.** This rule does not apply to educational settings such as lecture theatres and labs but it does to all social gatherings. It means meeting more than six people indoors or outside will be against the law and you could be fined.

**Know how it works in halls.** At university, a household will generally be people who are living in a shared house, or on the same halls of residence corridor, sharing a kitchen and bathroom. It doesn't include everyone in the same block. You can socialise at home within your household - even if there are more than six of you, but you won't be able to invite anyone round if there are six or more of you in the household.

**Don't abandon Freshers' week.** It may not be what you expected, but a lot of creative thought will have gone into events with social distancing, online events and outdoor events like food festivals and cinemas. Check your student union for details and be prepared to book ahead.

**Think about where you are.** Try to be aware of local lockdown rules and travel restrictions. You may also be told to avoid travel, including back to your family home, if your area is locked down. Further restrictions will be implemented around the university and also with socialising, so make sure you're up to speed with what's happening.

# Safety

Living on your own at university means learning to take care of your health, mental health, belongings and personal safety.

## Be COVID safe

All universities will be following government guidelines, from wearing facemasks in communal areas to social distancing on campus. Be sure to follow the usual quarantine guidelines if you are ill or someone in your house becomes unwell.

## What should I do if I have COVID?

If you have symptoms of coronavirus, you need to self-isolate for seven days, inform your tutors, flatmates and halls of residence and try to get tested.

## Stay safe on campus

Make sure your valuables are somewhere safe and contact on-campus security if you need help. Secondly, when you don't know the area very well, don't venture out alone late at night.



## What to do if you have symptoms of COVID

Self isolate immediately and book a test by dialling 119 or going [online](#). You'll need to continue self isolating until you receive the result.

The main symptoms to look out for are (though there are a multitude of other symptoms too):

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

## What to do if someone has COVID in my house?

You will need to quarantine for 14 days. If this is the case, make sure the university and your tutors know what's happening.

## Seek help if you feel anxious or depressed

You may feel nervous about meeting new people, stressed about the work and even feel homesick and lonely. All of this can have an impact on your mental health, so do seek help and don't suffer alone.

# How to master working remotely

Having to work remotely when at university may not be ideal, but with it comes plenty of opportunities to be more productive and find a good work-life balance. Here's what you need to know about making it a success.

## Embrace the flexible lifestyle

The pros of working from home and doing online lectures are that you can embrace a flexible approach to work. Most students are used to performing a balancing act, scrambling from classes to part-time jobs to extracurricular activities. Not having to commute to lectures or rush from lecture hall to library, means you can be more flexible in your approach to work and start and finish when you want.

## Work on your transferable skills

Working alone means developing a whole set of transferable soft skills that will benefit you in the long term: from of looking for your own answers and becoming more proactive about solutions, to your ability to manage your time and communicate effectively with tutors.

## Make use of Proprep's learning tools

Our aim at [Proprep](https://www.proprep.uk) is to reduce your academic stress and improve your understanding of challenging materials. We do this with easy-to-use online content and videos created by university professors. Alongside this, we have course-tailored study guides, which will help sharpen your skills with practice questions and video explanations. You can use our content on any device, anywhere.





## Learn to control your environment

This is a massive plus of remote studying. You have better opportunities to concentrate by not being around other people or having to block out noise. You can dedicate one place for quiet study, and if you're shy, you don't have to worry about interacting with other students in large lecture halls.

## Stay engaged

It's easy when you are remote working to cut yourself off, which is a big no-no at university, both for your mental health and your academic needs. The answer is to communicate daily. Check your emails, log in to the learning platform each day and talk to your flatmates. Most of all, make sure you participate in class, set a goal to ask a question or contribute to the conversation in every lecture.

## Take care of yourself

As in think about your personal needs, as well as your study needs. You may be working remotely, but you need to stay in touch with family and friends, go out and see people and maintain a healthy living routine. One where you keep regular sleep hours, eat well and be as active as you can.



# FAQs

## Can I get NHS help for COVID-19 as an international student?

NHS treatment for the Coronavirus (COVID-19) is free of charge for everyone.

## How will I receive my student loan?

Your maintenance loan is paid at the start of every term into your student bank account. This doesn't include extra funds you might get from your university if you're eligible for further financial support.

## How can I protect my possessions?

As well as getting home contents insurance, you should consider personal belongings cover for peace of mind. Getting insurance will protect your belongings, so you're covered if anything happens to your smartphone or your laptop.

## What if I want to leave university?

Speak to tutors, lecturers, department staff and other university staff who may be able to assist in your decision. Then speak to your student finance company. Regardless of what point in the term you leave your course, you'll have to pay for the full term of tuition fees. If you leave university in your third term, you'll have to pay for the full year of fees.

## Do I have to wear a mask in university?

Your university has to take steps to help with social distancing with staggered start and finish times for lectures, one-way systems and using outside space where possible. Unless you are exempt, masks or face coverings should be worn at all times.

## Is it too late to apply for student finance?

You can [apply for student](#) finance up to nine months after you start your course.

## What if I struggle financially?

Speak to the money advice service within your university: they will point you towards hardship funds and bursaries.



# Resources

[Anxiety UK](#) 03444 775 774

Support and help for anyone with anxiety

[Brook](#) sexual health and wellbeing advice for under-25s

[Crisis Text line Support](#) Text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a trained Crisis Volunteer

[Depression UK](#) A national self-help organisation helping people cope with depression

[MIND](#) Information on mental health, staying well and accessing help and support.

[National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) 0808 2000 247

[National Drugs Helpline](#) 0800 776 600

[National Self-Harm Network](#) support and advice for self-harmers

[NHS Alcohol Support](#) advice, support and information

[NHS Direct](#) 0845 46 47

[NHS Every Mind Matters](#)

Help and advice for a healthier and happier life

[NHS 24](#) (Scotland): 0845 424 2424

[NHS Direct](#) 111 (Wales)

Nightline Student Helplines is a national organisation of university student helplines  
Rape Crisis Find a Rape Crisis Centre, get online emotional support and information

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# Resources

[Rape Crisis](#) Find a Rape Crisis Centre, get online emotional support and information

[Samaritans](#) 116 123

Confidential help and support for anyone struggling to cope

[Sexual Health NHS](#) advice about sex/relationships/contraception

[Shelter](#) housing advice and help

[Students Against Depression](#) a website offering advice, information and guidance to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking

[Student Finance](#) information and advice

**Student Minds**, the UK's student mental health charity has also set up **Student Space**, to help support students through the Covid-19 restrictions. They have a phone helpline 0808 189 5260 that is open from 4 pm to 11 pm offering information and support.

[Switchboard LGBT+](#) Helpline 0300 330 0630

[Talk To Frank](#) 0300 1236600

Honest information about drugs

[The Mix](#) 0808 808 4994

Essential support, information and advice for under-25s

[UCAS](#) COVID-19 latest updates for students

[UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKISA)

Information, advice and help on everything from COVID-19 to fees, visas and housing.