Hello!

A massive congratulations on getting into vet school and **welcome to Liverpool**! What an achievement, you should all be super proud of yourselves!

We are the Peer Support team and our focus is on the **welfare and support of all vet students at Liverpool** – from Freshers’ Week to graduation, including any resit and intercalating years in between! It’s easy to get overwhelmed with the adjustment to university life and the intensity of vet school, so we work hard to help you take the pressure off yourself, so you can function at your best!

We’re all **individually contactable by email, Facebook, Zoom and of course in person** between lectures or for a coffee! We’ve all undergone training with a qualified therapist, and are here to offer you **support** for anything you could possibly want, big or small, as well as **helping direct you to the right people** within or outside of the University.

Vet school is a uniquely challenging place, and first year can be especially hard when you’re still finding your feet – both academically, with friends and many other facets. We promise to **listen** to you, **never to judge**, and always to **help resolve your concerns** as best we can – no matter how big or small. We also have access to, or can signpost you to, **lots of helpful resources** even if you don’t want to chat with us in depth – just **drop us a message** any time!

We ensure that **anything you say to us in confidence is kept between us**. We would always discuss with you before speaking to someone else if we felt you or others were at risk, so we could get better support for you. This **doesn’t affect your fitness to practice or to be on the course**. **Seeking support actually reflects well on you as it shows you know when to ask for advice** (a top skill for practicing vets), not to mention helps ensure your individual success in coping with vet school. Admitting you may be struggling so that our many support services can help you thrive is infinitely better than struggling alone.

Here’s some topics students have wanted to contact us about in the past:

* + Settling into halls
  + Finding friend groups
  + Tools to help to manage stress
  + Who in the university you can contact with questions
  + Feeling isolated/homesick
  + Difficulty with lectures/assignments
  + Frustrating housemates
  + Having a tough day/week/month
  + Grief and loss
  + Having to extend deadlines/get mitigating circumstances
  + Revision/note taking methods
  + Time management advice
  + Work-life balance
  + Relationship difficulties (family, friends, romantic)
  + Talking about mental health and where to get support

# Our Events

As a team, we run events throughout the year for students, such as:

**Talks and Workshops** which we will likely run in conjunction with the **Peer Academic Mentors** (who are also a wonderful bunch of people!) on topics such as:

* How to manage time between lectures, self-study and looking after yourself
* What it takes to thrive in vet school
* Overcoming perfectionism
* Communicating with clients with disabilities/mental health conditions
* Coping with stress
* Mindfulness (sometimes with yoga workshops)
* Challenges you may encounter as a new graduate in practice

**Tea and Talks** – come and chill on campus, enjoy some free drinks and biscuits. Some of the team will be there if you want to say hi, chat to them about any concerns you or your friends may have, or generally complain about vet school!

**Meet the Guide Dogs** – some furry friends from the Liverpool branch of Guide Dogs for the Blind come to the University to cuddle and help you de-stress (usually around revision time, always very popular)

**‘De-stress’ Events** – relaxed evening events, to give you the opportunity to meet some new people and have the opportunity to get to know some of us. These events are non-alcohol focused and can provide you with easy opportunities to chat with us and take some time away from uni work.

**LUVS Events** – we provide a peer support presence at every LUVS event (such as welcome party, Christmas party and Leafest to create a quiet space with some snacks to help keep everyone as happy and safe as possible throughout the night.

If you’d like to get involved with us, you can also join us as a Peer Supporter from your second year onwards. Training usually happens over a couple of weekends where you learn skills such as active listening, assertiveness, as well as the right way to direct people to other means of support when it’s needed. All these skills are so useful to you and your peers, both within the university and in your future career as a vet – every peer supporter that’s been through the training would recommend it highly to you and look forward to new students joining our team!

We can’t wait to welcome you into the vet school during the months ahead! Wishing you the best of luck, and see you soon!

**Liverpool Vet Peer Supporters :)**

For more information about Vet Peer Support, here are our online pages:

(you can click on the icons or links)

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