Guide for Parents & Supporters
Welcome to the Liverpool Family

Starting at university is an exciting time for families but also a time of transition and adjustment. As family and friends you played a key supporting role during the application process. The next major adjustment for students is to living independently, often away from home for the first time.

The University of Liverpool has a strong network of support for all students and offers services that can be accessed throughout their programme of study.

In this guide we aim to give a picture of the support that is available to all students, to indicate what we as a university do, but also what you can do to help your son/daughter at this exciting time.

Professor Janet Beer
Vice-Chancellor
Getting Started

Before arrival
We have teams of experienced staff waiting to welcome your son/daughter to the University of Liverpool. All new students are given a list of all the support available to them. We have provided you with a reference list at the back of this brochure.

Accommodation is one of the first concerns for new students. We can advise students, whatever they decide to do. Our Accommodation team provide information on their website for students living in University accommodation (www.liverpool.ac.uk/accommodation/support/parents/). Students who decide to live in the private sector can get help and advice from Liverpool Student Homes (www.liverpoolstudenthomes.org/Accommodation).

Living in halls/private accommodation
Things you can do to support your son/daughter’s transition to university include:
- Discuss budgeting and managing finances
- Basic cooking skills and how healthy eating is good for wellbeing
- Advise them to register with a GP as soon as they arrive in Liverpool – not to wait until they are ill. We have an excellent student health practice on campus
- Encourage them to get involved in campus life – clubs and societies, volunteering, going to events – there are lots of opportunities to get involved in Welcome Week and beyond. Many early friendships are made in Halls so if your son/daughter is staying at home, it is even more important for them to take every opportunity to make new friends.
- Encourage them to get involved in campus life – clubs and societies, volunteering, going to events – there are lots of opportunities to get involved in Welcome Week and beyond
- Talk about personal safety – their own possessions in accommodation and out and about, getting home safely
- Encourage them to ask for help if they need it.

Living at home
It may be that you live locally and your son/daughter is going to continue to live at home. This will also be a transition – the schedule your son/daughter keeps is going to be different from school/college, as are the study demands on them. To prepare for this transition:
- Discuss budgeting and managing finances
- Encourage them to ask for help if they need it.

All of our services are open to them. They may still have their support network close by but friends may be moving away, in work or attending a different university/course.
- Encourage them to get involved in campus life – clubs and societies, volunteering, going to events – there are lots of opportunities to get involved in Welcome Week and beyond. Many early friendships are made in Halls so if your son/daughter is staying at home, it is even more important for them to take every opportunity to make new friends.

The first few weeks
These are busy, exciting and daunting times, the first few weeks will be a big adjustment.

Welcome Week takes place before the start of teaching so there is time to get to know the campus, meet new people and to find out more about the University. There will be a programme of Welcome Week activities which will include a welcome to the University from the Vice Chancellor, talks from their Head of Department, meeting their Academic Adviser (and in some departments, meeting with a Peer Mentor), orientation on campus and the Guild of Students Welcome Fair. At the beginning of the week, all of the University services will be represented in the Guild building to provide initial advice and guidance.

During the week there will be lots of student helpers around campus who your son/daughter can speak to.

Registration
We strongly encourage all students to register with a GP. We have an excellent Student Health practice on campus provided by Brownlow Health. Students can register at the practice and online www.campusdoctor.org.uk/liverpool/reg www.brownlowhealth.co.uk

Settling in
Making friends is important to all new students. Reassure your son/daughter that it can take time to settle and make strong friendships.

Encourage them to get involved in campus life. In Accommodation, there are a range of social activities. Liverpool Guild of Students (www.liverpoolguild.org) has a vast range of clubs and societies to get involved with, along with student volunteering and the ‘Give it a Go’ activity programme.

Students can search for opportunities to make the most of their time at University through My Liverpool www.liverpool.ac.uk/my-liverpool

Students can also join sports clubs and the sports facilities www.liverpool.ac.uk/sports

Remember, not everyone is the same – some students can settle in very quickly, for others it may take more time. This can be difficult for families as you may not know what is happening and if your son/daughter is doing okay. Often parents can feel concerned because they don’t hear from their son or daughter as regularly as they expect, or a lot more often, or when they speak they seem upset.

Many of the concerns early on are because of the transition to university and students can experience homesickness. This is perfectly normal and affects many students. Encourage your son/daughter to give it time, access support available and engage with campus life. Do give your son/daughter some space while making this transition – this is a period of independence. All students can come and speak to the staff in Student Welfare Advice and Guidance if they have any worries while settling in. Often issues can resolve themselves however students can seek support and advice. We have a vast amount of experience and can provide students with valuable advice and support.

Getting to know a new place, new people, new information and learning coupled with some late nights can lead to students feeling rundown and exhausted. Encourage your son/daughter to have some balance in that first week and enjoy social activities such as going to the cinema, out for a meal or sightseeing in the city.

We are aware that some students will drink excessively. Remind your son/daughter about responsible drinking; there are dry bars in Liverpool. Do also speak to your son/daughter about personal safety and making sure they have plans to get home safely after a night out, including having money for a taxi. There are Hackney cabs which can be picked up at designated ranks or hailed. There are also a number of private hire firms.
During their studies

Study

The first week of teaching will introduce students to their studies and the expectations of the programme. The first year is an important foundation for future study.

Some students can wonder if they have chosen the right course, as they adjust to university study and being away from home. This isn’t uncommon and often accessing the relevant support can help students to consider their options or overcome any hurdles they are experiencing.

You may have concerns in these early stages and want to speak to someone at the University, as you may have been able to with school/college. The University is an adult learning environment. Under Data Protection Law, we cannot give out information to you (or any third parties) about your son or daughter. If you are very worried, you can call and give us information about your concerns and we will respond accordingly but please be aware that we won’t, however, be able to discuss how we will respond.

Please be reassured that there is support available and if you have concerns, please encourage your son/daughter to access the support available. Student Welfare Advice and Guidance are a confidential service.

Ongoing support

After the first few weeks, concerns or tensions may arise—this could be around sharing the chores in shared accommodation or learning to balance the demands of the course. Be supportive and encourage patience in adjusting to university study and living independently and to access the support and guidance available.

University study is a different way of studying and it will take time to adjust. There are a number of resources and sources of support students can access to help with this transition in their academic department and through the Library, for example KnowHow http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/KnowHow. The first graded assignments, whatever the grade may be, are an opportunity for more development—students are encouraged to make good use of the feedback on all assignments.

During their studies we hope that everything will run smoothly during your son/daughter’s time with us, however there may be times when they don’t. The early weeks are not the only time when a student may feel unsettled or concerned. For example, coming back after the summer break and adjusting to second year and final year, getting unexpected results and gaining experience outside of university can lead to students feeling unsettled or concerned.

Support is available for all students at any point during their studies. The Student Services Centre (SSC) should be a student’s first point of contact if they are having any problems that are affecting general welfare or ability to study. We encourage students, if they need to talk to someone but are not sure who, to come along to the SSC for initial support and guidance or a referral to specialist support. Our services are confidential.

When your son/daughter was at School or College, you may have been used to receiving information about their attendance, progress with their studies and pastoral support. The University is an adult learning environment. Under Data Protection Law, we cannot give out information to you (or any third parties) about your son or daughter. This includes their academic progress, results, attendance or if they are accessing support services.

However, we understand that there may be times when you are very worried. You can call and give us information about your concerns and we will respond accordingly. We won’t, however, be able to discuss how we will respond. Please be reassured that there is support available and if you have concerns, please encourage your son/daughter to access the support available. Student Services are a confidential service.

Scenarios

Here are some typical scenarios that can occur and may cause concern for parents, families or supporters.

I haven’t heard from my son/daughter

The start of university is a very busy time. Students may not be aware that you are concerned, or that an unanswered text while they are in lectures is worrying you. If you haven’t heard from them after a pre-arranged time, haven’t heard for a long period and haven’t seen any other communication (eg on Facebook), you can call Advice and Guidance and give us information about your concerns and we will respond accordingly. We won’t, however, be able to discuss how we will respond.

My son/daughter was upset/not themselves when I spoke to them

Adjusting to university life can present challenges and can take time. Students can sometimes feel in the minority if they feel they haven’t settled in or made friends as soon as they expected. Please be reassured that some anxiety is normal in the early stages of university. There is support available—students just need to come to the Student Support Centre service and ask.

My son/daughter has come home and is not happy/doesn’t want to return to university/doesn’t like the course

There are many avenues of support a student can access if they are unhappy about their studies. They can speak with:

- Advice and Guidance
- Academic Adviser and/or Learning and Teaching Support Officer/Student Support Officer in their School
- Counselling Service
- Careers and Employability Service
- Money Advice and Guidance.

Each of these services also have information and resources on their websites. As a last resort, students can discuss a possible Suspension of Studies, a pause and some time away to help them decide what they would like to do. Students are advised to discuss this with their School and Student Welfare Advice and Guidance.

I want to check that they are attending/I want to check how their marks are

When your son/daughter was at School or College, you may have been used to receiving information about their attendance and progress with their studies. The University is an adult learning environment. Under Data Protection Law, we cannot give out any information to you (or any third parties) about your son or daughter. This includes information about their marks and attendance. The University does have an Attendance Framework and procedures in place for dealing with academic progression, as well as support services.

My son/daughter hasn’t received their student funding. What can we do?

Your son/daughter should get in touch with Money Advice and Guidance who will be able to advise. Money Advice and Guidance are based in the Student Services Centre and run regular drop-in sessions.

My son/daughter is ill and we don’t know what to do

We encourage all students to register with a GP once they arrive in Liverpool. Our Student Health practice (part of www.brownlowhealth.co.uk) on campus has same day access, appointments can also be booked over the phone and online and they also offer a telephone consultation service.

If you are very concerned, you can contact Advice and Guidance and we will respond accordingly. We won’t, however, be able to discuss how we will respond. Students will need to inform their School/Department if they are unwell and their attendance is affected. The University has an Extenuating Circumstances Procedure, should the illness affect assessments.

I’ve just given my son/daughter some bad news/I have some bad news to give

There are many avenues of support a student can access. They can come and see Advice and Guidance, access the Counselling Service and speak with their School. It may be that the bad news has an impact on their assessments, for example in the case of bereavement. In addition to support services, the University has an Extenuating Circumstances Procedure should assessments be affected.
The Student Services Centre (SSC) is the home of Student Welfare Advice and Guidance and the central advice point for non-academic or welfare issues that students may be experiencing. The SSC should be a student’s first point of contact if they are having any problems that are affecting their general welfare or ability to study. If students need to talk to someone but are not sure who, we encourage them to come along to the SSC for initial support and guidance or a referral to specialist support. Our services are confidential. Student Welfare Advice and Guidance have an established network with services and support within the University and with relevant external agencies.

Our teams:

- **Advice and Guidance** provides initial advice on issues which may be affecting a student’s general welfare. Any student can get in touch with us – whether they need advice or just someone to talk to in a quiet and confidential space – we’re here. We do our best to help but if more specialist advice is needed, we will signpost or refer to relevant services.

- **Disability Advice and Guidance** co-ordinates individual support for disabled students, providing a specialist guidance and confidential support service for all prospective and current students.

- **Money Advice and Guidance** provides support and advice to both current and prospective students on a range of financial matters. Come along for assistance with funding issues, debt advice and how to apply for discretionary support through the University Hardship Fund for UK students.

- **International Advice and Guidance** is the central point of contact for international students throughout their time at University.

### The Counselling and Mental Health Advisory Service for students

We are actively involved in promoting positive mental health and deliver training across the University to staff and students as well as being available for consultation to students, staff, families, friends and external professionals.

The Counselling Service provides a range of therapeutic interventions to support students to get the most from their studies and manage the adjustments and demands that university life often brings. We provide drop-in sessions where students can attend without appointment as well as offering a variety of psychological help. We have a professional team of well qualified and experienced therapists who are here to help.

**T: 0151 794 3304**  
**E: counserv@liverpool.ac.uk**  
**www.liverpool.ac.uk/student Support/counselling/**

The Mental Health Advisory Service provides a confidential service for students experiencing complex and/or significant mental health difficulties during the course of their studies. We offer a range of interventions to students as well as being able to liaise across the University and also with relevant external agencies.

**T: 0151 794 2320**  
**E: mentalhealthadviser@liverpool.ac.uk**  
**www.liverpool.ac.uk/student Support/mentalhealth/**

### Student Health

The Student Health Service is provided by Brownlow Health and offers a range of medical and nursing facilities for all students depending on their registration status with the Practice. The service operates from two sites on campus. For details regarding the services offered to registered and non-registered students please consult the practice website or contact the practice directly for details.

**www.brownlowhealth.co.uk**  
**www.twitter.com/brownlowhealth**

### Safety and security on campus

The Security Office is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The team offers practical support and responds to any emergency situations on campus. The University has a Police Liaison Officer on the campus on a full time basis. Students can make an appointment to see the University’s Police Officer on **T: +44 (0)151 794 3216 or speak to Advice and Guidance on T: +44 (0)151 794 5863**  
**E: ssa@liverpool.ac.uk**

There are simple precautions students can adopt to take care of themselves and their possessions. Find out more **www.liverpool.ac.uk/student Support/**

### Support in university accommodation

University Accommodation provide a team of trained Residential Advisers who live amongst our students and are on-call out of office hours and at weekends to provide assistance. They are able to deal with difficult situations and provide a friendly face for students to talk to if help is required. All of our residences have high levels of security with swipe card or fob access round-the-clock security patrols and call-out.

Students can get in contact on **T: 0151 795 0319**  
**E: accommodation@liverpool.ac.uk**  
**www.liverpool.ac.uk/accommodation**

### Living in the private sector

Students who decide to rent privately can get help and advice from Liverpool Student Homes.

**T: 0151 794 3296**  
**E: lsh@liverpool.ac.uk**

### Support in Schools and Departments

Students are supported within their academic departments through their Departmental or School Student Support Office and their Academic Adviser. The Student Support Office is able to answer any queries relating to School/Department procedures, module registration, timetables, assessments and support within the School.

All students are allocated an Academic Adviser who should be the first point of contact for any queries or concerns about academic matters. Their role is a key part of the relationship between academic teaching staff and students, ensuring students have a positive student experience. They provide information, advice and guidance on academic matters and will direct students to further sources of information, advice and guidance on both academic and non-academic matters.

### Liverpool Guild of Students

Located at the heart of our campus, Liverpool Guild of Students is the Students’ Union for University of Liverpool students **www.liverpoolguild.org**. They offer opportunities to boost skills and get involved with campaigns for positive change, a fun and vibrant place for students to try new things and have fun, and a range of support services. The Guild Advice Service offer free, confidential, independent advice **www.liverpoolguild.org/advice**.

Nightline is a confidential phone service run by students, for students **www.liverpoolguild.org/main-menu/advice-support/nightline**  
**T: 0151 795 8100**
Finishing Studies

Leaving the University early
Sometimes a range of factors including more serious/difficult personal circumstances or health can affect how a student is enjoying and engaging with their course. They may want to press pause, to take some time to consider their options and, where health and wellbeing is concerned, to get better. Students are able to apply for a Suspension of Studies. Money, Advice and Guidance can advise students on the financial implications of a suspension of studies and there is guidance on the procedure here www.liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/student-record/suspensions/

Getting to the finish line
After all of the hard work, heaps of fun and new experiences, comes graduation.

The Careers & Employability Service offers support up to five years after graduation www.liverpool.ac.uk/careers

Alumni
Students can join our global network of alumni alumni.liv.ac.uk

The Liverpool Family is made up of more than 20,000 students, 195,000 alumni and many more parents, friends and supporters. Our Parent & Family network is open to anyone with a family member studying at the University of Liverpool, the network provides a unique way for you to get involved and share in the Liverpool experience. https://alumni.liv.ac.uk/alumni-website/home-page/parents-programme

Extending your studies
Students may wish to extend their stay in Liverpool. The University offers a range of postgraduate courses, including taught and research Master’s programmes, PhDs and online distance learning courses. You can find out more at www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/

Key contacts and information
Term dates
www.liverpool.ac.uk/term-dates/

University Switchboard
T: +44 (0)151 794 2000

Follow the University of Liverpool on Twitter @livuni @livuninews

Student Services
T: +44 (0)151 794 5863
E: ssrec@liverpool.ac.uk
www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/

Accommodation
T: +44 (0)151 795 0319
E: accommodation@liverpool.ac.uk
www.liverpool.ac.uk/accommodation

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