

## How to help

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

### 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.

We have put together a timeline of the types of issues students have told us they face throughout the year and included some suggestions of how you could help them with these. We hope using this resource throughout the year will help you know what to expect and feel more prepared to support your son or daughter.

- [Student timeline - understanding the first year \(/welcome/parents/understanding-the-first-year.aspx\)](/welcome/parents/understanding-the-first-year.aspx)

### How you can help

Although students start university as adults, many will still depend on their parents 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 your son or daughter 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 going through very similar things and may even bond over their common experiences.
- Having a rounded university experience and [developing skills \(/welcome/before/developingyourskills.aspx\)](/welcome/before/developingyourskills.aspx) is important in finding a good job after graduation. Encourage your son or daughter to get involved in [clubs and societies \(http://www.guildofstudents.com/groups\)](http://www.guildofstudents.com/groups) to gain these skills.
- There is a lot of [support available \(https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/index.aspx\)](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/index.aspx) at the University. Often when students are in the midst of a problem they don't remember this, so parents can often provide a useful prompt for them. Remind them that dealing with small issues could avoid bigger problems later.

We have included some more detailed tips and suggestions of how you could help your son or daughter on a month by month basis in our student timeline, below.

- [Student timeline - understanding the first year \(/welcome/parents/understanding-the-first-year.aspx\)](/welcome/parents/understanding-the-first-year.aspx)

### 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.

#### Personal tutors

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

#### Welfare tutors

Many schools and departments have dedicated welfare tutors who can help students with non-academic concerns. If your son or daughter does not know who this is they should contact their personal tutor who can refer them to the appropriate person or service.

#### University Senior Tutor

If students feel unable to talk to their personal/welfare tutor or issues remain unresolved after they have spoken to them, they can contact the University Senior Tutor. All communications are confidential.

- [University Senior Tutor \(https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/university-senior-tutor.aspx\)](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/university-senior-tutor.aspx)

#### Serious concerns

If you have a serious concern about your son or daughter's wellbeing, please contact Security 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 your son or daughter to contact you.

- [University Security \(https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/emergencies-and-security.aspx\)](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/emergencies-and-security.aspx)

### University support services

The University has a full range of specialist student services. Use the issue-based student support website to find out what's available to help your son or daughter.

[Student support website \(https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/index.aspx\)](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/index.aspx)

The University has also produced a series of Self Help Guides which provide practical advice and support for a range of issues.

[Self Help Guides \(http://www.selfhelpguides.ntw.nhs.uk/birmingham\)](http://www.selfhelpguides.ntw.nhs.uk/birmingham)

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