WILL I ENJOY STUDENT LIFE?

yes you will!

A GLIMPSE INTO LIFE AT UNIVERSITY
The prospect of university may seem like a long way away but it’s never too early to think about your future.

University is an opportunity to study a subject that interests you in more depth. It also gives you a chance to meet new people and challenge yourself. Most of all, it’s the way to start a really good career.

This booklet will introduce you to what life as a student at university could be like. It will give you a view of what it’s like to study at university and the fun stuff you can experience when you’re there.

So if the question is ‘Will I enjoy student life?’

Yes you will!

“I didn’t know anyone going to uni, and I didn’t know much about it all. But now I’m in my 2nd year, studying law and I couldn’t imagine not attending uni. All I had to do was ask the right questions, and there were lots of people to help with advice and support! You just have to take a chance.” Lauren
Can I think about it and go to university later?
Yes, if you don’t feel ready. Many people who missed out apply to university as mature students – it’s never too late. However, the experience will be different and it can be a more difficult decision to make once you are settled in a job. The important thing is to make an informed choice and not dismiss the higher education route. Make sure you look into it whilst you have the opportunity. Go on visits and get information and support, and then make your decision using that information.

Am I clever enough?

ANYONE WHO CAN ACHIEVE THE ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS FOR A HIGHER LEVEL COURSE IS CAPABLE OF SUCCEEDING ON IT.
So if you can succeed at A Levels or an equivalent level course such as BTEC Nationals, then yes, you are clever enough! A degree is a manageable ‘next step’ after your other courses, so try not to worry too much about that – just get the best grades you can, which will give you more choice. There are courses in colleges and universities to suit all levels of achievement.

I had a great time during the course, learning from professionals with a wide knowledge base who have enthusiasm and passion in what they teach. Before the course I didn’t consider myself an academic and thought university was something that other people did. However, from day one support was made available to help me to settle in to the academic side of the course. Lee

Is it really hard work?
Obviously to succeed you will have to work hard and it won’t always be easy. But you will be studying something that interests you and which offers you great future prospects, alongside others who want to do well – so you will be motivated and enjoy it!

Remember you have chosen what to study, so your passion and enthusiasm for the course will make learning seem easier. You will also be learning from experts, working with like-minded friends and using high tech and cutting edge facilities, so it won’t be hard to find that self-motivation which is the key to doing well at university.

Many students say that their A levels were more demanding than their university course. Being able to organise and plan your own work is important, and there is plenty of study help available to higher education students whichever route you take.

You choose
One of the main attractions of life as a student is the amount of choice you have – you choose what course to take and where to study it. On a day-to-day basis, apart from set lecture times, you choose what to do and when.
LIFE AND LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY

The way you learn and are taught at university differs a lot from what you are used to at school or college. You will have less time in lessons, and more time to study independently. The library is a great place to do this, fully equipped with computers, printers and the latest technology for you to use.

You choose your course
The course you do is up to you! There are over 37,000 courses available in the UK so the choice is huge. You can choose something that interests you, a career focused course or study something new. Sometimes you need to have studied specific GCSEs and A levels (or equivalent) so get advice and make your choices wisely.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT

9:30 Leave home
9:45 Arrive at university
10:00 Lecture
11:00 Finish lecture/go to library to prepare for seminar
12:00 Lunch with friends
1:00 Seminar
2:00 Finish seminar/ free time
3:00 Hockey match
5:00 Home to make tea with flatmates
7:30 Party at coursemate’s house

Could this be you?
Many university courses have ‘practical’ lessons. For example, science-based courses will have time in the labs to carry out experiments, for drama courses you will be in the studios for rehearsals. These are a ‘hands on’ approach to learning and will require you to apply what you have learned in your lectures and seminars to your work.

**TUTORIALS**

What are lessons like?
Actually they aren’t called lessons! You will learn in lots of different ways – usually through a combination of the following.

**LECTURES**

Most people will have some lectures each week. They last between one and three hours, depending on your course. Lectures give you an overview of the subject content.

Lecture halls are big rooms, a bit like a cinema, with a screen at the front and rows of chairs tiered towards the back. Your tutor will stand at the front and may use a PowerPoint presentation, computer link or visual aids to present to your class. These presentations are usually available after your lesson for you to look over again.

**SEMINARS**

These are much more like the classes you are used to. It will be a much smaller group – maybe between 10 and 20 people – in a small classroom.

You’ll discuss the topics covered in your lectures and any assignments you have been set with your tutor. You will usually have set tasks for seminars (a bit like homework) that you should bring along to your session. Seminars help build and test your knowledge of the subject you are studying.

**PRACTICALS**

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**TUTORIALS**

These can be individual or group sessions, in which you meet with your tutor to discuss any upcoming assignments, exams or problems you come across.

“I loved how we were allowed to constantly interact with each other to discuss our own ideas and theories, rather than sitting in silence for hours in lectures.”
Edward
WHERE WILL I LIVE?

You can live at home, although university offers a great opportunity to move away and start living independently.

Accommodation is available to most first year students in university. From the second year many students choose to live in a shared house with friends—you could always live at home in your first year and then do that.

University accommodation may be catered, which means your breakfast and evening meal are included in the price of your rent. Or, it could be self-catered which means you'll cook all your meals yourself. Also, most universities offer a choice between a flat with a shared bathroom or an en-suite, so there is a variety of accommodation for you to choose from.

Living away from home does come with some responsibilities! Wherever you choose to live you’ll have to learn to budget your money to ensure you can cover all of your outgoings, like food, course materials, and rent/bills. You may even learn how to cook, clean and iron!

Some people worry about moving away and living with new people. This is only natural! Here is a quote from a student which should help ease any worries you may have.

Don’t be afraid to go away from home— it’s fun and you get independence! You don’t even have to go far away from home. Amelia

Location, location, location

It is also possible to live at home and travel to university. For students in the Sheffield City Region there are at least 11 places you can study within daily travelling distance.
Volunteering
All universities will offer some form of volunteering opportunities. Whether it be working for the university or for charity, there are many options. This is a great thing to put on your CV, and could also count towards you getting a job – if you want to be a teacher, volunteering in a school will greatly improve your chances.

Travel
There are many opportunities to travel whilst at university, which will broaden your horizons and give you a wide range of life and cultural experiences.

Erasmus
One of the programmes available is Erasmus, a great opportunity to spend between three and 12 months studying in another European country, and have it count towards your degree! You will experience life in a different country and a new way of looking at your subject. You can make new friends and grow as a person.

Year abroad
Have you ever wondered what it would be like to go to university in Hong Kong, New York or Sydney? Many universities give you the option to spend a year abroad and then return to complete your degree.

IT’S NOT ALL HARD WORK!
University is a great place to have fun and meet new people. Universities offer lots of choices of clubs and societies to join.

Societies are a brilliant way to meet new people, make friends, and give something a go for the first time. There are sports societies, subject-specific societies (for example, maths society), and many others for every hobby and interest imaginable.

JOINING A CLUB OR SOCIETY IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED AND CAN BE A FUN AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Socialising (with your friends)
There is plenty of time to socialise with friends at university. A great thing about being a student is that you can keep the cost of this down by using your student discount. This will get you discounts when shopping or eating out and things like cheaper cinema tickets.

YOU COULD ALSO MAKE FRIENDS BY VOLUNTEERING, WHICH WILL HAVE THE ADDED BENEFIT OF LOOKING GOOD ON YOUR CV!

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Living in Spain was the best thing I have ever done! The chance to live abroad is an amazing opportunity and you get so much more than the language. Matthew
A QUICK WORD ON FINANCE

There are lots of myths about student finance, but university is affordable. Here are the facts – remember

- you don’t pay upfront to go to university
- you can get loans to cover the cost of course fees and living costs
- you don’t pay anything back until you earn over £21,000
- you may never pay the full amount back – your loans will be written off after 30 years

For more information on student finance, you can visit www.yesyoucango.org

CONCLUSION

IF YOU WANT TO GO TO UNI, IT’S A GREAT EXPERIENCE THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE. SO WORK HARD AND MAKE SENSIBLE CHOICES...

Will I enjoy student life? We say YES you will!
WILL I ENJOY STUDENT LIFE?

YES YOU WILL!