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| HIGHER EDUCATION PREPARATION |
|  | **YOUR FIRST WEEKS…** |  |

**Starting your higher education studies is an incredibly exciting time, with new people to meet, new places to explore, and new experiences to try. This guide can help you plan your first weeks at university, including how to get the most out of this time and where to seek support to help you with the transition.**

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| **MOVING IN** | **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME** |
| **Unpacking** your belongings can help you feel more **comfortable** and **settled** in your new **living space**. You may also want to consider purchasing a **TV licence**. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **MEET YOUR HOUSEMATES** |
| Keep your **door open** and **hang around in the kitchen** so that you can **say hello** to your housemates as they arrive. Remember that **they’re in the same position as you**, and **probably just as nervous**! Our **icebreaker suggestions** overleaf may help with getting to know everyone. Once you have had an opportunity to introduce yourselves, you may want to discuss how you are going to **organise** your shared cupboard, fridge and freezer space. |
| **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **EXPLORE THE LOCAL AREA** |
| If you have moved to a new location, start identifying where the **local shops** are located and **how you will travel** to and from lectures, seminars etc. Are you going to **walk** or **take the bus**? |
| **FRESHERS’WEEK** | **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **GO TO THE FRESHERS’ FAIR** |
| An opportunity for you to discover the range of **clubs** and **societies**, such as sports teams, choirs, arts societies, fund-raising organisations, the student radio station and much more, available at your college or university. Businesses may also attend to advertise **part-time job opportunities** they have. Expect to receive a lot of **freebies** such as pizza, stationery and items to decorate your new room, so **make sure to take a large bag** with you! **Why not arrange to go with your new housemates?** |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **TAKE PART IN CLUB AND SOCIETY TASTERS** |
| **Free** **taster sessions** are typically offered during Fresher’s week. These are fantastic opportunities to **continue a hobby** or **try something different**, all whilst **meeting new people**. If you decide to become a **member**, you could **even join the committee** and **add this experience to your CV**! |
| **STARTING YOUR STUDIES** | **A picture containing drawing  Description automatically generated** | **EXPLORE THE CAMPUS** |
| Becoming **familiar** with the **campus** can help **reduce the likelihood of being late** for your first lectures, seminars etc. Make sure you know where to access your weekly set **reading materials** and what **study spaces** are available by **visiting the library**. Whilst you are there, explore the other facilities available to you such as the **gym**, **cafeteria** and the **student union!** |
| **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **COMPLETE YOUR ENROLMENT** |
| Your college or university will send you **instructions** for when and where to confirm registration onto your course. As part of this you will receive your **student card**, which you may require in order to **access certain facilities** (and get **student discount**!). |
| **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **CHECK YOUR TIMETABLE**  |
| This is typically available **online**. Remember that your lectures, seminars etc. **may not start at the same time as your housemates and friends**; you do not want to miss a key introductory session! |
| A picture containing drawing  Description automatically generated | **LOG ONTO YOUR ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM** |
| Here you can access **module handbooks**, **reading lists**, **lecture slides**, **assignment briefs** and a range of other study resources. As higher education study involves a significant amount of **independent learning**, it is important to become familiar with your college or university’s online learning platform. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **ATTEND WELCOME EVENTS** |
| Colleges and universities often schedule these to help you **get to know your classmates and lecturers**. You can also **ask any questions** you have before starting the academic year. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **ARRIVE EARLY TO YOUR FIRST LECTURES** |
| This provides another opportunity to **meet and chat with classmates** whilst you are waiting to go into a lecture hall and/or before your lecture begins.  |
| **YOUR WELLBEING** | **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **ACCESS STUDENT SERVICES** |
| Your college or university can **support** you with **transitioning** to higher education study and moving away from home. For example, they may assign you a **personal tutor**, pair you with a **mentor** and/or offer **mental wellbeing services** such as mindfulness sessions. Many offer a ‘**Nightline’** service, where you can **confidentially** and **anonymously** speak to student volunteers about how you are feeling and anything that is troubling you. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **REGISTER WITH A GP** |
| Signing up at a doctor’s surgery during your first weeks can help **prevent delays in booking a doctor’s appointment** if you need one during the academic year. Larger colleges and universities typically have a **health centre on campus**, but if this is not available then speak to **student services** about **local surgeries** they know of. |
| A picture containing laptop  Description automatically generated | **EAT HEATHILY, EXERCISE AND GET ENOUGH SLEEP** |
| The first weeks of university can be very busy, so **make sure you are looking after your physical and mental wellbeing**. If you are socialising at night with your new friends, make sure that you **schedule time to catch up on your sleep**. This will help ensure you do not **burn out** during the academic year. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **KEEP TO YOUR BUDGET** |
| Spending a lot of money is **particularly alluring** during Freshers’ week when you are busy meeting new people and trying new activities, but remember that **what you have needs to last for the rest of term!** **Which? University** has a **student budget calculator** to help you with this: [**https://bit.ly/2xYqDQT**](https://bit.ly/2xYqDQT)**.** See **our ‘managing your money’** **resource** for further advice and guidance. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **DO NOT PUT PRESSURE ON YOURSELF** |
| **Do not worry** if you are not making best friends in your first week or if you do not go to as many parties as you thought you would. **You have all year to do this!** Feeling the **pressure** to **drink**? Not the **partying type**? **You are not alone!** Watch this video: [**https://bit.ly/363OyLt**](https://bit.ly/363OyLt)**.** The brilliant thing about your higher education experience is that **you can make whatever you want out of it.** |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **CALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY** |
| **It is normal to feel homesick** during this time. **Arrange a call with loved ones** to catch up with them and raise your spirits. **Try to resist the urge to visit home for the first few weeks**, however, as this may only **delay your transition** to independent living. |

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| **ICEBREAKER ACTIVITIES** |
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| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **TWO TRUTHS, ONE LIE** |
| **Materials: none**Each person shares three statements about |
| themselves, two of which must be true and one must be false. The other players must decide together which is false. |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **WORD CHAIN** |
| **Materials: none**The group picks a category (e.g. food) and the first |
| player says a word that fits the category (e.g. soup). The next player must, within five seconds, pick a word that begins with the letter that the previous word ended with (e.g. peas). *Example word chain: soup - peas - sugar - rice* |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **WHO AM I?** |
| **Materials: sticky notes, pens**Each player secretly writes the name of a famous  |
| person on a sticky note, and places it face-down in front of the person next to them. Without looking, everyone picks up the sticky note assigned to them and sticks it to their head. Taking it in turns, players ask the group questions to help identify who the famous person written on the sticky note on their head is. |

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| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **CARD GAMES** |
| **Materials: playing cards (you may need more than one pack depending on the number of players)** |
| * **31:** each player receives three cards, face down. In turns, they pick up a card from a pile in the middle, add this to their hand, and then discard a card from their hand. The winner is the first person to have the value of 31 in their hand. An Ace counts 11 points, face cards (e.g. King) count 10 points, and all other cards count their face value.
* **Cheat:** all cards in the deck(s) are dealt to each player, one by one. Taking it in turns, each player places 1-4 cards, face down, on the top of the discard pile, and claims what they are. The player must claim the cards are of the same value (e.g. “three Kings”). The other players can challenge and call “cheat” if they think the player is lying about the value of the cards. If “cheat” is called, the played cards must be turned face up and shown to everyone. If the challenger is correct, the player must pick up all cards in the discard pile. If the challenger is wrong, they must pick up all the cards in the discard pile. If no challenge is called, the next player takes their turn. The winner is the first person to empty their hand.
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| **SLN Connect** is funded by the **Office for Students** and works in partnership with the **Chichester College Group** to provide **free** and **impartial** **information, advice and guidance on progression pathways** (including **college** and **university** study and **apprenticeships**). |
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|  | [**sussexlearningnetwork.org.uk**](https://www.sussexlearningnetwork.org.uk/) |

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