Information for new students with Autism Spectrum Disorder/Asperger Syndrome

This information has been put together in collaboration with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder/Asperger Syndrome. It includes their comments and advice and we hope you find it helpful. Click on the link to navigate through the document.

If you have any suggestions or information to add, please contact Carole East in Disability Support (carole.east@nottingham.ac.uk)

More information about preparing for university is available at:

Coping with Change

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Managing work
Who provides what, and how to contact them
  - In your accommodation
  - In your School
  - University Support Services
  - Disability Support (including exam arrangements, mentoring support, note taking support)
  - Academic Support
  - Financial Support
  - Counselling Support
  - Chaplains and Faith Support
    - Student Union (Clubs and Societies, Student Volunteer Centre, Nightline)
  - Sports Centre

Student Recommendations to help you study and reviews of some societies you might enjoy

Coping with change

- I'm feeling homesick - what should I do?
- I feel like I’ve made a big mistake coming here:

This is quite natural; it’s such a big change. Talk to people and use the support outlined in the sections below.

- There's so much going on, I am finding it difficult to deal with information overload:
Don’t feel you have to take in all in at once. If you have been offered transition support, your mentor will be on hand to support you over the first 2 weeks of term. Disability Support organise this and you will have been given your mentor’s contact details before you arrive. Make sure you meet up with them!

Students’ comments:

💡 You have to learn to be more independent - you aren’t chased like you were at school
💡 You need to work out how to use unstructured time
💡 It’s a big shift from school, but don’t stress because you will get used to it
💡 Make sure you keep to a routine: eating, sleeping and taking care of yourself
💡 Don’t be proud, ask for help

Managing Fresher’s Week

➢ I can’t find any events I’d like to go to and I am scared I’ll miss out.

Check the Student Union website for more information about what’s going on.

➢ Will I still get help after the first week?

Support is available throughout the year: please make sure you keep in touch with your School and Disability Adviser! If you have been recommended ongoing mentor support, your Disability Adviser will arrange this.

Students’ comments:

💡 There’s no such thing as a stupid question in Fresher’s Week because everyone is in the same boat - it’s everyone’s first week at uni.
💡 Join as much as you can and find out what clubs and societies you like and what you don’t like. It’s ok to decide to leave if you don’t think it’s for you.

Managing my social life

➢ I haven’t met anyone and I am feeling lonely; what should I do?

Why not try out some sporting activities - there are lots of taster sessions and it’s a great way to meet people.

Think about what interests you and see if there is a club or society. Find out more at: http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/societies/find-a-society/
Students’ comments:

- It’s ok if you can’t talk to people sometimes.
- Remember the only person you have to please is yourself!
- For societies the best thing is to go to Fresher’s Fair; however, there are a lot of people at Fresher’s Fair and it can be very overwhelming. Before you go it’s best if you go on the Student Union and Athletics Unions websites and see what societies and clubs you would like to join. That way you know what to expect there so you can find the societies and clubs you want. Remember to try and go to as much as possible at first as you can change your mind later.
- Check out what students say about some of the societies below.

Managing work

- I’m not sure I understand the rules and how things are done here
- How can I find out how to use Turnitin?
- Who can I talk to about help with timetables?
- Who can I talk to about help with modules and arranging module choices?
- Who can I talk to about my work and how much work should I do?
- Do I have to read everything on the Reading Lists?

See the information below about who to contact in your School. If you have a mentor, they can also help with these questions.

- How do I balance what I should be doing work-wise and find time for myself?

Your mentor can help you find ways to manage your time

- What if I don’t get on with my mentor?

This doesn’t happen very often, but if it does, please talk to your Disability Adviser

Students’ Comments:

- You can approach your lecturers - they are helpful and non-judgemental

Who provides what, and how to contact them:

In your accommodation

Hall Wardens and Deputy Wardens provide support for the welfare, pastoral care and social needs of students

Hall Tutors work alongside the Hall Wardens. They are postgraduates who provide all-round practical support to undergraduate resident students
In your School

Personal Tutors: you will be assigned a Personal Tutor and you will be given information about this during your first week. They are usually a member of staff from your home School and your first point of contact if you are struggling with your degree for any reason (e.g. health, personal circumstances). Your Personal Tutor can also act as a guide to other support services within the University.

Disability Liaison Officer (DLO): every School has a DLO who provides a point of reference, advice and guidance for members of staff and students about disability issues and support. Your Disability Adviser or Personal Tutor can tell you who your DLO is, and how to contact them.

The School Office: staff in your School Office are a knowledgeable and helpful source of information about how things work in your School.

Your School may also offer peer mentors; these are students who are in the same school and know how things work.

University Support Services

**Disability Support:** You may have met with a Disability Adviser before you arrived. Disability Support co-ordinates support and access arrangements for disabled students and those with long term medical conditions. [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentservices/supportforyourstudies/disabilitysupport/index.aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentservices/supportforyourstudies/disabilitysupport/index.aspx)

Talk to your Disability Adviser about your exam arrangements and Support Workers:

**Mentoring Support:** Mentors can work with you regularly throughout the term to help with time management, organisation and to give a bit of additional reassurance. They can also provide transition support to help you through the first couple of weeks of term to help you settle in. This will have been agreed with you before you arrive, it usually includes:

- Support with registration and collection of student card
- Support with Health Centre registration
- Support to arrange a meeting with your Disability Adviser
- Departmental orientation (may include attending induction meetings)
- Campus orientation, including the Sports Centre
- Familiarisation with Hopper bus routes
- Library orientation
• Support to take part in Fresher’s Week and Student Union events during Fresher’s Week

• Information about the local area and social activities

**Note taking support:** Note takers will be arranged once this support has been agreed with your Disability Adviser and you have submitted your timetable to the Support Worker Service.

**Academic Support:** offer study support to all students, including those who are dyslexic, dyspraxic, or have AD(H)D. They can also arrange Support Workers. [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentservices/supportforyourstudies/academicsupport/index.aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentservices/supportforyourstudies/academicsupport/index.aspx).

**Financial Support:** provide advice and information about financial matters. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/financialsupport](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/financialsupport).

**Counselling Support:** time and space to talk confidentially about problems that concern you. [www.counselling.service@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:www.counselling.service@nottingham.ac.uk) Phone: 0115 951 3695

**Chaplains and Faith Support:** support students and staff of any faith or none. There is a hospitality space within the Chaplaincy in the Portland Building, with coffee usually on the go during term time. A Chaplain is available for a quiet word or advice most of the time. A quiet word in a confidential space can be arranged at short notice. They run a range of events and outings. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/chaplaincy](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/chaplaincy).

**Student Union**

**Clubs and Societies:** check out the university website ([http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk](http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk)) or browse the corridor in the Portland Building.

**Student Volunteer Centre:** a great way to get involved with other people in a variety of interesting activities ([http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studywithus/studentlife/volunteering.aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studywithus/studentlife/volunteering.aspx)).

**Nightline:** a confidential information and listening service run by students for students. You can phone, e-mail or IM and call free via Skype. [www.nottingham.nightline.co.uk](http://www.nottingham.nightline.co.uk), phone: 0115 951 4985.

Student recommendations to help you study:

- Habit RPG. An online time management application that takes the form of a role-playing game. https://habitrg.com/static/front
- Pomodoro technique a time management programme http://pomodorotechnique.com
- Tomatoes. Use the Pomodoro technique to track your working time in 25-minutes slots called pomodoro. http://tomato.es/
- TimeMate (for iphone) or Gleeo (for android phones) to create a time log on your phone http://www.timemate.com.au/ http://gleeo.com/
- http://writtenkitten.net/ for positive reinforcement when writing

Student’s reviews of some societies that you might enjoy - please let us know if you would like to add any new reviews:

Gamesoc - I am console rep on this society and it’s where I fitted in most. We meet up and play video games. When you arrive all you have to do is either bring your laptop/computer or play pc games in the pc section with other people. For console gamers if you have a 3ds bring that otherwise there is a selection of consoles that you can turn up and play. What happened when I first went is you wait a bit for a turn, sit down and play and while playing you will probably make light conversation and slowly make friends throughout the session. It surprising how quickly you can talk to people because you can just talk about the video game in front of you all.

Boardgame society -This is good if you like in-depth board games it is really fun. You simply turn up then people will generally come to you and ask you to join in with a game. Then you can play a game with other people. You may not know any of them but, like Gamesoc, you have the game to talk about and it can be fun to play a board game and laugh at the one person being destroyed by everyone or laugh at yourself as everyone destroys your village in a game.

Hide and soc - This is generally a collection of children’s’ games. This can be extremely good fun. Normally they meet up in a room and play some kids’ games like wink murder and when that gets a bit boring play hide and seek in the Portland building. This can be really fun and can help you make friends again as you are all working towards a common goal by either helping each other hide or seeking together. And don’t worry about being left hiding in a game they normally time it for 15mins so that you’re not hiding forever.
Sci fi, fantasy and anime - I have only been to anime nights but from what I have heard sci-fi/ fantasy is very similar. You will arrive and have about 30mins of socialising then will vote on what you want to watch that night. Then you will watch it till the end. Afterwards they often go to a pub called the Johnston Arms (I think). This can be very good if you don’t think you can handle a lot of socialising as you don’t have to talk during the watching so there isn’t much socialising to do.

Rocksoc - Listening to Rock music with other people who really like that sort of music and generally making friends. This is held in the city.

Nerf soc - At Nerf they have a large collection of Nerf guns and put tables on their sides and use cardboard cut outs to create a battle zone so you can shoot other people and try to win games they play. Really fun if you’re into Nerf.

Lego society - Here they have lots of Lego and if this is your thing you can go here and talk to other people who play with Lego.

Magic society This is good if you want to know how to do card tricks and generally want to become Harry Potter and learn all about magic.