



Student Transitions

Union President- Paul Tobin

Welfare Officer- Jennifer Hastings

Women's Officer- Amy Sutherland





Pre-University to arrival

- Family
First time away from home for a prolonged period; lack of parental support
- Friends and Boyfriends/girlfriends/partners
Too busy to stay in touch, while long-distance relationships suffer
Long-distance relationships can prove an extra problem on top of everything
- Fear
Multitude of worries- course difficulty, not making friends, not enough money
- Independence
Exciting but increases possibility of new mistakes and a lack of self-reliance



Settling In

- Looking after yourself

The practical elements, such as cooking and cleaning, can be more of a shock than many students expect. If there are also ongoing issues (eg an existing mental health condition or problems at home) then such day to day tasks can be even more demanding.

- Finding your way around a new city/campus

Depending on where the student is from, Sheffield can seem like a whole different world. It's also easy to take for granted distances between various places on campus however, for new students, locating all of their lectures can be a minefield at first.



- Getting used to University life

Many students find tasks such as registration demanding. It can also be difficult to adjust to a completely new way of doing things (such as assessment submissions).



Returning Home

- Family and Home changes

The home dynamic changes. Parents divorce, siblings have moved out, families move house, pets are gone, bedrooms are gone.

- Homesickness V Sick of home

Students have been encouraged to be responsible adults but at home they may still be considered the child of the family. Alternatively students may return home and dread going back to University after a bad first term/year.

- Finding Friends

Whilst a student is away their home friendship group may change or disintegrate making holidays a lonely time. Alternatively students may feel more comfortable with home friends and have no desire to go back to University.

- Packing and travelling

Packing and travelling can be an endurance test. International students can have a long way to go with little luggage allowance.

Academic

- Disparity between grades

The potential jump from coming top of the class to somewhere in the middle

- The need for self-discipline

The transition from regular contact hours to independent learning

- Greater focus

The lack of variety due to studying one subject in greater depth, not several

- Anxiety over grades

Students often feel even greater pressure than at A-Level, exacerbated by fees





Social

- Making friends

Many students come from having a close knit group of friends and can feel quite lost when they have to start from scratch and build up a new friendship group.

- Fitting in

Finding your niche is something many students feel anxious about. The depiction of University as the 'best time of your life' can be daunting.

- Different kinds of social events

Wider range of activities with more freedom to try new things (and possibly more money).

There is a greater propensity for events to include alcohol and/or drugs.





Personal

- Self development
There are a huge range of ways for students to develop their skills.
- Play time to work time
It is vital to find an appropriate work:life balance.
- Unsettled to secure, and back again
By the time many students settle in it's almost time to leave.
- I think therefore I am
University is a key time for developing personal opinions and beliefs.
Religious and political beliefs may change completely.





Leaving University

- Paul

Applying for MA and Ph.D. study.

- Jen

Looking for a job back in Liverpool.

- Amy

Taking a PGCE in Social Science and Citizenship at Manchester Met.





Paul's Transition

- Societies

Model United Nations and the Politics Society

- Sport

Basketball and Sports Committee

- Student Representation

Students' Union Council and Student-staff committee





Jennifer's Transition

The continued transition between home and University

- The transition of leaving home can last longer than expected.
- Personally, I found adjusting between the two environments to be one of my biggest challenges, as it can feel like you aren't given enough time to settle in one place before you're going back to the other.
- For some students, their first time home will be Christmas, for others it will be considerably sooner. Either way, being sensitive when talking about trips home is a good idea, as some students may have actually found it a lot harder than they let on.





Amy's Transition

- Balancing work with studying can be tricky.
- Working long shifts is not a legitimate reason for an essay deadline extension. (unfortunately!)
- Some institutions discourage students from working altogether during their degree, but this isn't necessarily a realistic outlook.
- In the current climate it is expected that an increasing number of students will be working in one way or another, whether paid/unpaid alongside their degree.
- Standing up to employers and knowing your rights to say no are important.





Any Questions?

For more information, please email-

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