

WELCOME

Preparing for University

Starting university is an exciting milestone, but it can also bring uncertainty, questions and change.

You may be looking forward to new opportunities, greater independence and studying a subject you enjoy. At the same time, you might be wondering how you will manage new routines, unfamiliar environments, accommodation, social expectations or being away from home.

Whatever you are feeling right now is okay.

This workbook has been created to help you prepare for university in a practical, supportive and neuroaffirming way.



You don't have to have everything figured out before you begin.



WHO IS THIS WORKBOOK FOR?

This workbook is designed for autistic young people preparing to start university.

It may also be helpful for:

- ✓ Young people awaiting an autism assessment
- ✓ Young people exploring autistic experiences
- ✓ Parents, carers and family members supporting a young person preparing for university
- ✓ Professionals supporting autistic students during transition



HOW CAN I USE THIS WORKBOOK?

There is no right or wrong way to complete this workbook. You can:

- ✓ Work through it in order
- ✓ Focus on the sections most relevant to you
- ✓ Complete activities independently or with support
- ✓ Return to pages whenever you need them
- ✓ Make notes, highlight ideas or adapt activities to suit your needs



This workbook belongs to you. Use it in whatever way feels most helpful.



HOW IS THIS WORKBOOK STRUCTURED?

We have divided this workbook into two parts:



PART ONE: Emotionally Preparing for University

This section explores:

- Understanding change
- Managing uncertainty
- Recognising your strengths
- Building confidence
- Looking after your wellbeing
- Preparing emotionally for the transition ahead



PART TWO: Practically Preparing for University

This section explores:

- University support services
- Accommodation and independent living
- Managing money and daily life
- Travel and navigation
- Study skills and organisation
- Building support networks
- Creating your own preparation plan



ABOUT THE MORE YOU KNOW AUTISM SERVICES

The More You Know Autism Services provides autism assessments, education, training, resources and support for children, young people, adults, families and professionals.

Everything we create is guided by our core values:



EMPOWER

Helping people understand themselves and advocate for their needs.



EDUCATE

Providing practical information, resources and support.



EMBRACE


Celebrating neurodiversity and creating spaces where people feel understood, valued and accepted.



A FINAL THOUGHT BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You do not need to know everything before you start university. You do not need to have every answer. Preparing is not about being perfect.

It is about understanding yourself, recognising what helps you thrive and taking small steps towards the future you want to build.

Take your time.
Be kind to yourself.
We're glad you're here. 



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WHAT MIGHT CHANGE AT UNIVERSITY?



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Change is a normal part of university life.
- ✓ You can prepare, plan and ask for support.
- ✓ It's okay if some changes feel exciting and others feel scary.
- ✓ You are building skills for independence and the future.



University is a big step and many aspects of daily life may look different. Change can feel exciting, overwhelming, or both! It can help to know what might be different so you can prepare in ways that work for you.

Remember: You don't have to figure it all out at once. You're allowed to take it one step at a time.

AREAS THAT MIGHT CHANGE



ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES

You may have more flexibility, but also more responsibility to plan your time.



PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

You'll meet new people and may be away from family and friends.



LIVING SITUATION

You might live in halls, a shared house or privately, with new housemates or alone.



LEARNING AND TEACHING

More independent study, different teaching styles and new ways of learning.



MONEY AND BUDGETING

Managing money, bills and day-to-day expenses will become more important.



TRAVEL AND GETTING AROUND

New routes, timetables or longer journeys to campus or placements.



INDEPENDENCE AND DECISIONS

You'll make more choices for yourself, from meals to time management.

THOUGHT STARTER

Which changes feel exciting, challenging or uncertain for you?

You can write, draw or list them here.



CHANGE CAN BRING...



GOOD THINGS

- ♥ New experiences
- ♥ Learning new skills
- ♥ More independence
- ♥ Exploring your interests
- ♥ Meeting new people
- ♥ Building your future



DIFFICULT THINGS

- ♥ Feeling overwhelmed
- ♥ Missing people and places
- ♥ Uncertainty and change
- ♥ Managing new responsibilities
- ♥ Homesickness
- ♥ Trying new things

THINGS THAT CAN HELP



PREPARE

Gather information, plan ahead and think about what will help you feel more comfortable.



CONNECT

Talk to others, ask questions and build your support network early.



USE TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Keep using what works for you and be open to trying new things.



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

It's okay if things feel hard sometimes. You are learning and growing.



ASK FOR SUPPORT

University staff are there to help. You don't have to do it all alone.



TOP TIP

You don't need to be ready for everything. You just need to be willing to take the next step.



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You've got this.
One step at a time.



MIXED FEELINGS ARE NORMAL



Excitement, worry, happiness, uncertainty — you might feel all of them, sometimes at the same time.

Everyone experiences a mix of emotions when facing something new. There is no “right” way to feel.

All your feelings are valid.

Understanding them can help you feel more prepared and less alone.

“

It's okay to feel excited and nervous. It means you care about this new chapter.

”



COMMON FEELINGS YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE



EXCITED

Looking forward to new experiences, independence and opportunities.



WORRIED OR ANXIOUS

About coping, making friends, coursework, finances or being away from home.



UNCERTAIN

Not knowing what to expect can feel unsettling.



OVERWHELMED

There is a lot to think about and plan.



HOPEFUL

Looking forward to building your future and achieving your goals.



LONELY OR SAD

Missing familiar people, places and routines.



There are no “good” or “bad” feelings here. They are all part of preparing for change.



TIP

It can help to talk about how you feel with someone you trust. You don't have to go through this on your own.



REMEMBER

Feelings come and go.
You will not feel this way forever.



You are allowed to take your time.
You are allowed to ask for help.
You are allowed to put yourself first.



WHAT FEELINGS AM I EXPERIENCING?

Right now, which feelings are showing up for you most?
Tick or colour the ones that feel familiar today.



Excited



Worried



Uncertain



Overwhelmed



Hopeful



Lonely



Nervous



Curious



Motivated



Scared



Other: _____

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT



What is exciting about starting university for me?

What worries or concerns do I have?

What might help me feel more confident and ready?



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UNDERSTANDING MY NEEDS

What helps me thrive?



“ _____

When I understand my needs, I can plan better, communicate clearly and look after myself.

_____ ”



Knowing your needs and what supports you is one of the most powerful things you can do when preparing for university. It helps you make informed choices, ask for the right support and create an environment where you can succeed.

Your needs are valid. Your needs matter. There is no “one size fits all” at university – what works for you is what matters.

AREAS TO THINK ABOUT



SENSORY NEEDS

What sensory inputs affect you?
What helps you feel comfortable?



ENERGY AND REST

What helps you manage your energy?
How do you recharge?



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

What supports your mental health?
What helps you feel calm?



COMMUNICATION

How do you prefer to communicate?
What makes it easier for you?



ROUTINES AND STRUCTURE

What routines or structure help you feel organised and secure?



SOCIAL NEEDS

How do you like to connect with others?
What feels supportive and comfortable?



LEARNING PREFERENCES

How do you learn best?
What helps you stay focused?



ENVIRONMENT

What kind of environment helps you feel safe and able to concentrate?



You can use this page to start identifying what matters most to you. You can add notes, doodles or bullet points – whatever works.

ONE SMALL CHANGE I CAN MAKE

Is there one thing you could put in place before starting university to support your needs?



WHAT SUPPORTS ME?

List the things, people, strategies or environments that help you feel good and function well.

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

WHAT CAN BE CHALLENGING?

List any situations, environments or expectations that you find difficult or draining.

1	2	3
4	5	6



TIP

You can share your needs with university support services, tutors or accommodation teams. The more information you can give, the better they can help.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Understanding your needs helps you create a plan that works for you, not against you. It supports your independence and helps you thrive.



Your needs are not a weakness.
They are important information.
They are part of who you are.



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BUILDING CONFIDENCE

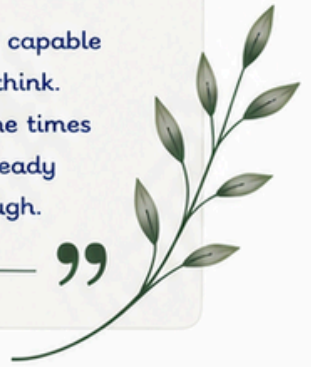
I am capable



“ _____

You are more capable
than you think.
Remember the times
you've already
got through.

_____ ”



University is a big step, and it's normal to doubt yourself sometimes. Confidence doesn't mean never feeling unsure – it means trusting that you can handle challenges, even when you don't have everything figured out.

You have strengths. You have experiences.
You have what it takes.

MY STRENGTHS

What are some of your strengths?
Think about skills, qualities or personal traits.



Everyone has different strengths. Yours are valuable.
Focus on what you are good at – and keep building on that.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK

What are some kind and helpful things you can say to yourself when you're feeling unsure?



Treat yourself like you would treat someone you care about.



PAST SUCCESSES

Think about times when you've achieved something, overcome a challenge or made yourself proud.
What happened? What helped you?

1

What happened? _____
What helped me? _____



2

What happened? _____
What helped me? _____



3

What happened? _____
What helped me? _____



You've done hard things before.
You can do hard things again.

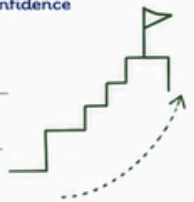
CONFIDENCE BUILDER PLAN

What are three small things you can do to build your confidence before and during university?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



TIP

Confidence grows with action.
Start small, keep going, and celebrate progress.



CONFIDENCE IS A SKILL

It grows every time you try,
learn and keep going.



You don't need to be perfect.
You just need to be willing
to give it a go.



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MANAGING ANXIETY AND UNCERTAINTY

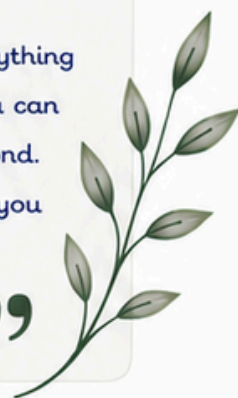
Tools to help you cope



“ _____

You can't control everything that happens, but you can control how you respond. Small steps can help you feel more in control.

” _____



Feeling anxious about university is completely normal. There are lots of unknowns, and change can be overwhelming at times.

The good news is: there are ways to manage anxiety and feel more in control.

It's about finding what works for you.

WHY DO I FEEL ANXIOUS?

Anxiety often comes from worry about the future or situations that feel unfamiliar.

Some common worries might include:



Academic pressure or workloads



Living away from home



Making friends or fitting in



Uncertainty about the future



Getting around or new places



Social situations and communication

WHAT HELPS ME?

Everyone is different. Tick or circle the strategies that usually help you, and add your own ideas.

	Talking to someone I trust	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deep breathing or relaxation exercises	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Listening to music or podcasts	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Going for a walk or moving my body	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Journalling or writing my thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Using a fidget or sensory tool	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Having a calm, quiet space	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

GROUNDING TECHNIQUE: 5-4-3-2-1

When anxiety feels overwhelming, grounding techniques can help bring you back to the present moment.

Try the 5-4-3-2-1 method:

5 things you can see

4 things you can feel

3 things you can hear

2 things you can smell

1 thing you can taste

WORRY TIME

Set aside 10–15 minutes each day as your “worry time”. Write down your worries, then put them away until tomorrow. This can help stop worries taking over the whole day.



MY WORRY TIME WILL BE:

Day: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

NOTES FOR MYSELF

What could I do next time I start to feel overwhelmed?



TIP

It's okay to not feel okay sometimes. Using coping tools doesn't mean there's something “wrong” with you. It means you're looking after yourself.



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LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

I've done hard things before



You have already managed changes, challenges and new experiences in your life. Recognising what has worked for you in the past can help you feel more prepared and confident for university.

You've got experience. You've got strengths.
You've got this.

“ _____

Look back with kindness.
Recognise your effort.
Trust your ability to
handle what's next.

” _____



1 WHAT CHANGE OR CHALLENGE HAVE I MANAGED BEFORE?

Think of a time when you faced a change, challenge or something that felt difficult. It could be something big or small.

SOME EXAMPLES MIGHT INCLUDE:

- Starting a new school or college
- Managing exams or deadlines
- Speaking up for myself
- Moving house
- Learning a new skill
- Changing a routine or habit
- Making new friends
- Coping with a difficult time
- Trying something outside my comfort zone
- Joining a new club or activity
- Travelling somewhere new

MY EXAMPLE:

2 HOW DID I MANAGE IT?

What did you do? Who or what supported you?

3 WHAT WORKED WELL?

What helped the most? What strengths did you use?

4 WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT MYSELF?

What did you learn from that experience about yourself, your needs or what helps you?

5 HOW CAN I USE THIS FOR UNIVERSITY?

What ideas, strategies or strengths from this experience can help you at university?



MY REMINDER

If I have managed change before,
I can keep building on that.



I have strengths
that help me.



I can learn
and grow.



I can handle
what's next.



TIP

Write this somewhere you can see it.
It's a great reminder when you're
feeling unsure.



YOU'VE GOT THIS

Every step you take is preparing
you for your future.



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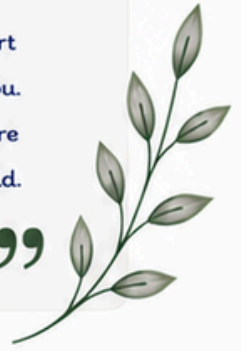


MY COPING STRATEGIES THAT WORK

What helps me through change



“
You are the expert
on what helps you.
Your strategies are
valuable and valid.
”



You already have strategies that help you get through uncertain, stressful or challenging times.

Recognising what works for you now will help you build your toolkit for university.

1 WHAT SITUATIONS CHALLENGE ME?

Think about situations that can feel difficult, overwhelming or stressful.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____


2 WHAT HELPS ME IN THESE SITUATIONS?

What do you do that helps you cope? Think about strategies, routines, people, environments or tools.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____


3 WHAT MAKES THESE STRATEGIES WORK WELL?

Why do these strategies help you? What is it about them that makes a difference?

_____ 

4 WHO OR WHAT SUPPORTS ME?

Who is in your support network or what resources can you rely on when things get tough?

_____ 

5 HOW CAN I USE THESE STRENGTHS AT UNIVERSITY?

How can you adapt or use what works for you now in your new university environment?

_____ 

6 WHAT NEW STRATEGIES DO I WANT TO TRY?

Are there any new ideas or strategies you would like to explore before or during university?

_____ 

MY PERSONAL TOOLKIT



Choose your top 5 strategies that help you most. These are your go-to tools.

1

2

3

4

5



TIP

You already have what it takes to get through change. You've done it before, and you can do it again.



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Some days will be easier than others. Use what helps you, ask for support, and take things one step at a time.



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SOLUTION FOCUSED REFLECTION

I focus on what works



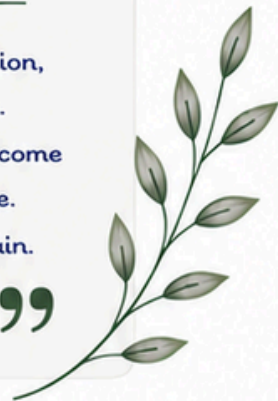
“ _____

Focus on the solution,
not the problem.

You've already overcome
challenges before.

You can do it again.

_____ ”



When we focus on what's worked before, we remind ourselves that change is possible. You already have the skills, strengths and resources to keep moving forward.

This page is all about recognising your successes and building on what works for you.

1 WHAT CHANGE HAVE I MANAGED BEFORE?

Think about a time you made a positive change in your life, no matter how small.

Describe the change:





Big or small, every change is a step forward. You've done it before, and you can do it again.



2 HOW DID I DO IT?

What steps did you take? What strategies, routines or actions helped you?

What I did:





You already have experience in making change. Your past success is a guide for your future.



3 WHAT WORKED WELL?

What helped the most? What strengths, resources or support made a difference?

What worked well:



4 WHAT DID I LEARN?

What did this experience teach me about myself, my strengths or what is possible?

What I learned:



5 WHAT WAS I PROUD OF?

What are you most proud of from this experience?

I'm proud of:



6 HOW CAN I BUILD ON THIS?

How can you use what you've learned and what worked well to support your next steps at university?

Next steps I can take:



LOOKING FORWARD



What is one small step you can take this week that builds on your past success?

MY REMINDERS



I have overcome challenges before.



I have strengths and skills.



I have what it takes.



I can keep growing and learning.



I am capable of change.

REMEMBER



You are not starting from scratch. You are starting from experience. You've got this.



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UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSITY SUPPORT

Knowing what support is available 

Starting university doesn't mean you have to manage everything on your own. Universities offer a range of support services to help students succeed academically, socially and emotionally.

Knowing what support is available can help you feel more confident and prepared before you start.

“ _____

You don't have to manage everything on your own. Support is there to help you thrive, not just survive.

” _____ 

WHAT SUPPORT MIGHT BE AVAILABLE?



DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Can help with:

- ✓ Reasonable adjustments
- ✓ Support plans
- ✓ Exam arrangements
- ✓ Access to specialist services
- ✓ Advice and guidance



ACADEMIC TUTORS

Can help with:

- ✓ Coursework concerns
- ✓ Academic progress
- ✓ Goal setting
- ✓ Signposting to support
- ✓ Questions about your course



WELLBEING SERVICES

Can help with:

- ✓ Mental health support
- ✓ Emotional wellbeing
- ✓ Stress management
- ✓ Counselling services
- ✓ Advice during difficult times



STUDENT SUPPORT TEAMS

Can help with:

- ✓ Settling into university
- ✓ Practical difficulties
- ✓ Accommodation concerns
- ✓ Financial advice
- ✓ General student support

WHAT SUPPORT MIGHT HELP ME?

Tick any that sound useful.

- Disability Support
- Academic Tutor
- Wellbeing Team
- Counselling
- Peer Mentor
- Study Skills Support
- Accommodation Support
- Financial Advice
- Careers Service
- Other: _____



QUESTIONS I WOULD LIKE TO ASK

What would you like to know before starting university?



MY SUPPORT CONTACTS



SERVICE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Disability Support		
Academic Tutor		
Wellbeing Service		
Student Support		
Other		

BEFORE I START UNIVERSITY...

Things I would like to find out:

- How to contact Disability Support
- What adjustments are available
- How to access wellbeing services
- Who my academic tutor will be
- Where support services are located
- What to do if I need help
- Other: _____



TOP TIP

You do not need to wait until things become difficult before asking for support.

Support works best when it is accessed early.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

HELP IS HERE

ASK EARLY

YOU CAN DO THIS



Asking for support is a strength, not a weakness.



Remember: Support is there to help you succeed in a way that works for you.

You deserve the support you need.



ACCOMMODATION AND LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

Making a space that works for you

Moving away from home is a big step. Your accommodation will be your base for studying, relaxing and recharging.

Thinking about what you need, what helps you feel comfortable and how you will manage day-to-day living can make the transition easier.

There is no 'right' way to do this - it's about finding what works for you.

“ _____

You don't have to become completely independent overnight. Independence is something you build over time.

_____ ”

WHAT MIGHT MY ACCOMMODATION BE LIKE?

Universities offer different types of accommodation.



In halls of residence



In shared student housing



In private accommodation



At home while studying

Every option has advantages and challenges.

The best choice is the one that works for you.

MY HOME COMFORTS

What helps me feel comfortable, calm and settled?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

DAILY LIVING SKILLS CHECKLIST

Before university, how confident do I feel with:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Laundry | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cleaning my space | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cooking simple meals | <input type="checkbox"/> | Using public transport | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Food shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | Making appointments | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Managing money | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asking for help | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking medication | <input type="checkbox"/> | Managing my timetable | <input type="checkbox"/> |



TOP TIP

You do not need to become completely independent overnight. Independence is something you build over time.



Creating a space that works for you is an important part of university success.

THINGS THAT MATTER TO ME

How important are these things when choosing accommodation?

Feature	Important?
Quiet environment	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Private bathroom	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Shared kitchen	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Close to campus	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Good transport links	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Own bedroom	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Access to support	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆
Sensory-friendly spaces	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

THINGS I WANT TO PRACTISE BEFORE UNIVERSITY

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

MY SETTLING IN PLAN

When I first move in, I could:

- Unpack familiar items
- Explore the local area
- Learn where important places are
- Create a simple routine
- Save important contacts
- Identify a quiet space
- Plan meals for the week
- Arrange regular contact with home



Small steps today build confidence for tomorrow.



MAKE IT YOUR SPACE



ESTABLISH ROUTINES



TAKE CARE OF BASIC NEEDS



CHECK IN WITH YOUR WELLBEING



REACH OUT WHEN NEEDED

MANAGING MONEY AND DAILY LIVING

Building confidence for independent living

Living independently involves lots of small tasks that can sometimes feel overwhelming.

The good news is that these skills can be learned, practised and adapted to work for you.

You do not need to know everything before you start university.

“ _____

Small daily actions build independence. It's not about being perfect – it's about finding what works for you.

” _____

HOW CONFIDENT DO I FEEL?

Rate each area.

SKILL	NOT YET 	A LITTLE 	MOSTLY 	CONFIDENT
Managing money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budgeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cooking meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remembering appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THINGS I ALREADY KNOW HOW TO DO

Sometimes we focus so much on what we don't know that we forget what we can already do.

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

THINGS I'D LIKE TO PRACTISE

Before university, I would like to feel more confident with:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

TOOLS THAT COULD HELP

What might make life easier?

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Calendar reminders | Budgeting apps |
| Phone alarms | Visual schedules |
| To-do lists | Support from others |
| Meal planners | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| Shopping lists | |

MY INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN

- One thing I could practise this week: _____
- One thing I could practise this month: _____
- One thing I feel confident about already: _____



TOP TIP

Independent living is not about doing everything perfectly. It's about finding systems that work for you.



SHOP



EAT



WASH



PLAN



BUDGET



TAKE CARE



Support, reminders and routines are tools for success, not signs of failure.



Small steps every day lead to big confidence.



You are learning skills that will help you now and in the future.

You've got this!



TRAVEL AND FINDING MY WAY AROUND

Feeling more confident getting from A to B

Travelling to university and navigating a new environment can feel overwhelming at first.

The good news is that confidence often grows with practice and preparation.

You do not need to know everything on day one.

“ _____

It's okay to take your time to find your way.

Everyone starts somewhere.

_____ ”

MY TRAVEL PLAN

How will I usually travel to university?

- Walk
- Bus
- Train
- Tram
- Cycle
- Car
- Other: _____

MY ROUTE

- Starting point:** _____
- Destination:** _____
- Approximate journey time:** _____



Try travelling your route at the same time you will usually travel, if possible.

THINGS I CAN DO BEFORE I START

- Visit the campus
- Practise my route
- Save directions on my phone
- Download transport apps
- Check timetables
- Identify a backup route
- Locate important buildings
- Explore campus maps
- Save important phone numbers
- Other: _____



PLACES I WANT TO FIND



Library

- Found
- Not yet



Library

- Found
- Not yet



Food and drink areas

- Found
- Not yet



Quiet spaces

- Found
- Not yet



Toilets

- Found
- Not yet



Student support services

- Found
- Not yet

WHAT MIGHT HELP IF I FEEL LOST OR UNSURE?

- Use a map
- Ask a member of staff
- Contact a friend
- Use a navigation app



Take a break and regroup



Follow signs around campus



Other: _____



MY CONFIDENCE BUILDER

One thing I could practise before university:



One thing I already feel confident about:



TOP TIP

Nobody expects you to know where everything is immediately. Most students spend the first few weeks figuring things out.



Confidence grows through familiarity. Every journey is practice for the next one.



STUDY SKILLS AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Learning in a new way



At university, you are expected to manage your own learning more independently. That can feel challenging at first, but there are lots of ways to make it more manageable.

You do not need to know everything straight away.

You are learning as you go.

“

There is no 'right' way to study at university. It's about discovering what works for you and using the support available.

”



WHAT MIGHT BE DIFFERENT?

At university, you may experience:



Larger workloads



More independent study time



Lectures and seminars



Longer assignments



More reading



Fewer reminders about deadlines

HOW DO I LEARN BEST?

Tick any that help you learn effectively.

- Visual information
- Written instructions
- Practical examples
- Breaking tasks into smaller steps
- Quiet working spaces
- Studying with others
- Regular breaks
- Colour coding
- Checklists
- Digital tools
- Other: _____

MY STUDY TOOLKIT

What tools or strategies help me stay organised?



- Calendar reminders
- To-do lists
- Timers
- Digital planners
- Sticky notes
- Visual schedules
- Study apps
- Other: _____

BREAKING DOWN BIG TASKS

A large assignment can feel overwhelming. Choose one task and break it into smaller steps.



One step at a time

My Task _____

Smaller Steps

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

WHEN I FEEL STUCK...

What could I do?



- Contact my tutor
- Ask a classmate
- Visit study support
- Take a short break
- Break the task down further
- Use my study tools
- Other: _____

MY STUDY SUCCESS PLAN

Three things I want to remember:

- ★ _____
- ★ _____
- ★ _____



TOP TIP

You do not need to do everything at once.

Progress is often made through small, consistent steps.

Small steps lead to big changes



Successful studying is not about working harder. It is about finding strategies that work for you.



REMEMBER:



PLAN AHEAD



MANAGE YOUR TIME



CREATE A STUDY SPACE



ASK FOR SUPPORT



BE PROUD OF YOUR PROGRESS

BUILDING MY SUPPORT NETWORK

Nobody succeeds alone



Support can come from lots of different places. Having support doesn't mean something is wrong. Everyone needs support sometimes.

The people around us can help us navigate challenges, celebrate successes and feel connected.

“



You do not have to do this on your own. There are people who want to help. You just have to let them know.

”



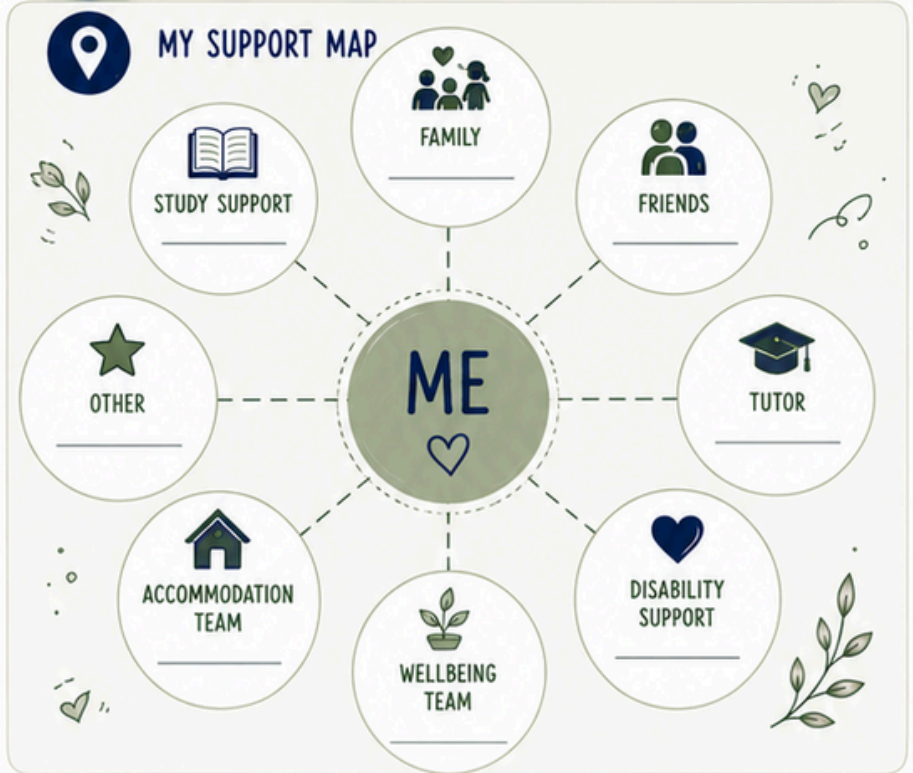
MY SUPPORT NETWORK

FAMILY
 Who can I contact for support?
 • _____
 • _____

FRIENDS
 Who helps me feel understood?
 • _____
 • _____

UNIVERSITY STAFF
 Who might I contact if I need help?
 • _____
 • _____

PROFESSIONALS OR SERVICES
 Who else supports me?
 • _____
 • _____



DIFFERENT PEOPLE HELP WITH DIFFERENT THINGS

SITUATION	WHO COULD HELP?
Feeling anxious	
Academic concerns	
Accommodation problems	
Practical questions	
Feeling lonely	
Health and wellbeing	

REACHING OUT CAN BE HARD

If asking for help feels difficult, what could make it easier?

- Sending an email
- Texting first
- Making a list of what I want to say
- Asking someone to come with me
- Using online support
- Practising beforehand
- Other: _____

MY REMINDER

Three people or services I could contact if I needed support:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

TOP TIP

You do not need to wait until you're struggling to connect with support. Building relationships early can make asking for help easier later.

Support networks are not a backup plan. They are part of success.

MY UNIVERSITY PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Bringing it all together



Use this checklist to see how you're getting on. Tick what you've done, plan what's left, and celebrate your progress!

There's no rush—every step forward counts.



Small steps today create confidence for tomorrow. You've got this!

THINGS I HAVE ALREADY DONE Tick anything you've completed.

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT

- Contacted Disability Support
- Explored support available at my university
- Found important contact details
- Identified who I can ask for help



ACCOMMODATION & DAILY LIVING

- Applied for accommodation
- Thought about what environment suits me
- Practised independent living skills
- Started planning what I need to take



STUDY SKILLS

- Thought about how I learn best
- Identified helpful study tools
- Explored support for learning
- Considered organisation strategies



WELLBEING & SUPPORT

- Identified people in my support network
- Thought about what helps me manage stress
- Considered my wellbeing needs
- Made a plan for asking for support



THINGS I STILL NEED TO DO

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

MY TOP PRIORITIES BEFORE UNIVERSITY



- ★ _____
- ★ _____
- ★ _____

WHAT AM I LOOKING FORWARD TO?



- Something I am excited about: _____
- Something I am curious about: _____
- Something I hope to achieve: _____

MY CONFIDENCE SCALE

How prepared do I feel right now?



Not Ready

Very Ready

What would help me move one step further?



Take a moment to be proud of what you've already done!

BEFORE I FINISH THIS WORKBOOK...

One thing I want to remember:



You do not need to have every box ticked before you start. Preparation is about feeling more informed and confident, not about being perfect.



PLAN



EXPLORE



PREPARE



ASK FOR HELP



BELIEVE IN YOU



You are already preparing for university simply by taking the time to think about what you need.



MY PERSONAL UNIVERSITY PLAN

My plan, my way



“



You are the expert on you. This plan is all about what works best for you.

”



PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

There is no single "right" way to prepare for university. The best plan is one that works for you, your strengths and your needs. Use this page to bring together the ideas, strategies and supports that feel most important.



MY STRENGTHS

What strengths will help me at university?

- ★ _____
- ★ _____
- ★ _____
- ★ _____



WHAT HELPS ME THRIVE?

Think about the things that support your wellbeing, learning and confidence.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



SUPPORT I WANT TO HAVE IN PLACE

Who or what will help me succeed?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



MY GOALS FOR MY FIRST TERM



Academic Goal



Wellbeing Goal



Personal Goal

IF THINGS FEEL DIFFICULT...



What will I remind myself?



Who could I contact?



What strategies help me most?



MY COMMITMENT TO MYSELF

This year, I will try to:



LOOKING AHEAD

What am I most excited about?









REMEMBER

University is not about becoming a different person. It is about finding environments, opportunities and supports that help you be yourself.



You already have strengths, experiences and skills that will help you succeed.



19.

A NOTE FROM US

Before You Go...



“



You are not behind. You are not too much. You are exactly where you need to be.

”

♥ If you've completed this workbook, you've already done something important.

You've taken time to think about yourself, your strengths, your needs and the support that helps you thrive.

That matters. ♥



Starting university is a big step. There will be exciting moments, new opportunities and experiences you haven't had before.

There may also be challenges, uncertainty and times when things feel difficult.







That's true for most students.

You do not need to have everything figured out before you begin. ♥



Most importantly...

AS YOU MOVE FORWARD, WE HOPE YOU REMEMBER:

- ♥ Your needs are valid. 
- ♥ Asking for support is a strength. 
- ♥ It is okay to do things differently. 
- ♥ Progress is not always linear. 
- ♥ You do not have to navigate challenges alone. 
- ♥ Your wellbeing matters. 

You do not need to become less autistic to succeed. You do not need to hide who you are. You do not need to fit someone else's idea of what a university student should look like.



The goal is not to change who you are. The goal is to understand yourself, recognise what helps you thrive and build a university experience that works for you.

AS YOU BEGIN THIS NEW CHAPTER...

-  Be patient with yourself.
 -  Celebrate small successes.
 -  Learn from setbacks.
 -  Keep asking questions.
 -  Keep advocating for yourself.
 -  Keep building on your strengths.
- ♥ And remember that growth does not happen because everything is easy. Growth happens because you keep going. ♥

WE BELIEVE IN YOU ♥

Whether you are feeling excited, nervous, confident, uncertain or a mixture of all four, we hope you know this:

- ♥ You already have strengths.
-  You already have experiences.
- ★ You already have resilience.
-  You already have what it takes to take the next step.

♥ Thank you for letting us be part of your journey. We are cheering you on. ♥



**THE MORE YOU KNOW
AUTISM SERVICES**

Empower ♥ Educate ♥ Embrace



Scan for more resources, information and support ♥