



# after abingdon:

**HELPING YOU PREPARE  
FOR LIFE AND LEARNING  
AT UNIVERSITY**



ABINGDON

A programme of informative, interactive and fun seminars and workshops designed to give you a head start as you go off to university.



# Introduction

The transition from school to university is a very exciting time. In fact, it's life-changing. During your first year at university, you'll enjoy a whole range of new experiences, make new friends, learn so many new things and live independently. It's all new, so you're bound to have a load of questions about what lies ahead. That's why we've put together this programme, which has been designed with the singular goal of helping you prepare for life and learning at uni.

We have thought hard about what you might find helpful. We've asked you what you want, we've asked OAs who are current undergraduates what they wished they had known when they were in U6, and, wherever possible, we've asked younger teachers to deliver the sessions. After all, their memories of uni are recent and relevant.

Almost everything in the programme is original, yet nothing in the programme is compulsory. You can choose to join one, five, eight, zero or all sessions; as few or as many as you like. It's entirely up to you. What we will say is that you are bound to take away something valuable from every session...and have some good fun along the way; at least that is what we hope!

## What's on offer and when?

The programme runs from **Monday 1 June until Friday 19 June 2020**. All sessions occur during periods 3 and 4. We have split the programme into two tracks:

**Academic** (on Tuesdays and Thursdays)

and

**Non-academic** (on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays).

You will soon receive a schedule with details of all sessions, including their title, scheduled date/period, staff leader, and Zoom room number. If you want to join a particular session, we will ask you to let us know by booking online. This will help us anticipate turnout, and so modify the style of delivery for the group size.

## The academic track

Your guides through the academic track of the programme will be teachers with a specialism or particular interest in the subject you have chosen to study at university. We have done our very best to match your degree course with the right expert. There is something for everyone. Teachers will deliver a special pre-university course that introduces you to the level of study and content you might encounter in your first term or so. Think of these as 'tasters', which give you a flavour of what it's going to be like studying your subject at uni. These live, interactive sessions will be delivered via Zoom and might include:

- presentations
- videos
- workbooks
- problem-solving
- Q&A



Accompanying these sessions will be academic support videos. It's a pretty big leap from school, where you have a full, structured timetable of lessons and teachers tracking your progress, to uni, where you'll have more hands-off lectures and tutorials, with much of your time 'free' for independent learning. It's entirely up to you to use your time effectively, get out of bed to make that lecture on time, hand work in when due, organise your notes and so on, so that when it comes to exams or dissertation-writing you have everything you need. And it really is important to do this from day one! Videos might include:

- lecture note-taking tips
- time management and prioritising
- moving to more independent learning – tips and traps
- cognitive overload and working in the zone
- discussion groups – opportunity for any general questions
- specific tips for working at university with ADHD/Dyslexia etc

Some will be original productions by Abingdon School teachers and others will be a 'best of' selection from what's available online, many narrated by university lecturers and students.



# The non-academic track

The non-academic track of the programme approaches things from a different angle. We've listened to you and planned seminars and workshops around what you want. The aim is to provide you with some practical advice on what to expect when you arrive at university; what to take with you; how to make the most of what's on offer; how to deal with everyday stuff like shopping, cooking, fitness & health; getting and keeping your finances in good order; and readying yourself for 2nd year accommodation. For those taking a gap year, there is support for you, too.

Seven areas will be covered, some of which run over one period and some over two periods. They are:

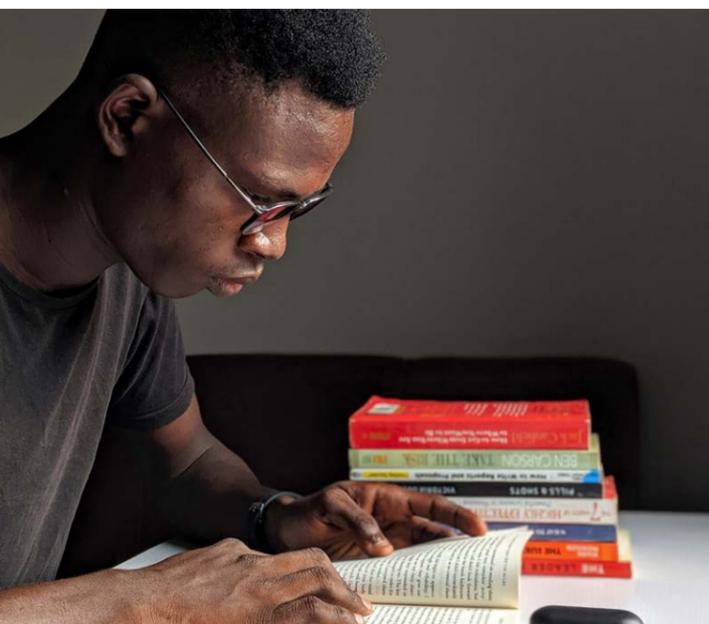
## Getting it right first time

with Lawrence Barber, Callum Richardson and Peter Moore

First year university students have common experiences no matter where they attend university; some are good, and some not. This is all about what to do and what not to do to have a successful first year at university. This trio of recent graduates will address a range of topics including:

- getting accustomed to a less structured day/timetable
- dealing with and making the most of lectures and tutorials
- managing and being in control of your workload (when no one is chasing you)
- asking for help when needed from lecturers and tutors
- using time well to study and revise for exams
- debunking the "first year grades don't count" myth
- making the most of clubs & societies
- forming friendships within and outside your course
- drinking responsibly (including during Freshers' Week)
- establishing a healthy lifestyle, including sleeping patterns
- stretching a limited budget
- applying for summer internships & work experience

This will be delivered in two parts, so book for both to make the most of what they have to say.



## Cooking on a budget

with Nick O'Doherty

A 'cooking for dummies' style overview of the key things you need to know to cook and shop for food on a typical university budget. This will be delivered in two parts, so if you want the full picture, book for both.



## Making the most of university student services

with Alice Perry

Many undergraduates are unaware of the vast array of services available at university and often miss out on valuable support and advice they could really use. Recent graduate Alice Perry will provide an overview of the services a typical university offers, how they can help you and how to access them when you need them. She will cover things like:

- the student union
- the accommodation office
- clubs & societies
- counselling services
- the university careers office
- finding a job on campus
- help with industrial placements/the year abroad
- how you can get involved

# The non-academic track

## Managing stress and anxiety at university

with Dominique Thompson, University of Bristol

Dr Dominique Thompson is an award-winning GP, young people's mental health expert and TEDx speaker with over 20 years of clinical experience caring for students, including as Director of Service at the University of Bristol Students' Health Service. She is engaging and funny and has a lot of really useful advice and practical tips on dealing with the stress and anxiety that can be experienced during the transition from secondary school to university and during the first year. Her seminar will consider the nature of academic pressure, how to build independence, resilience, and a support network, and practical things to do, such as identifying priorities, getting into good sleep routines and so on.



## Moving into private accommodation

with Michael Triff

You'll feel like you've only just arrived at university when, before you know it, someone tells you that you need to sort out second year accommodation by early next year. This seminar provides you with tips about what to do (and when). It will cover:

- how and when to get started
- how to choose suitable housemates
- what to look for in a property
- how to make the most of property viewings
- accommodation costs and assessing value for money
- dealing with landlords and their agents
- rent guarantors, deposits and contracts
- haggling over rooms
- setting up utilities
- vacating and getting your deposit back
- where to get help



## Money matters

with Michael Triff

Not very confident in your personal financial management skills? Or just want to double check that what you are doing is correct? Fear not. These practical seminars will teach you all you need to know about money matters that are relevant to you at university (and after). Over five sessions, the content covered will include:

- budgeting
- banking
- insurance and debt
- student loans
- taxation (delivered in two parts)

## Gap year planning

with Michael Triff

If you are not off to university this autumn, and are taking a gap year instead, this offering is for you. The first session will be a gap year presentation, and the second a facilitated group discussion about gap years. Through both, you'll learn how to think about, make decisions, and put in place a tailor-made plan that achieves your individual goals for a gap year. Following these two sessions, you can book one-to-one Zoom meetings to get help with your specific gap year plan.





---

ABINGDON

Congratulations to our 2020 leavers!  
We look forward to supporting you over  
the coming weeks.

+44 (0)1235 849041  
[abingdon.org.uk](http://abingdon.org.uk)