



UCL

A Guide to UCL for students on the Autism Spectrum...





Welcome to UCL...

Starting your university experience

Starting university is exciting but it can also be overwhelming. This guide aims to provide you with practical information and outline sources of support that are available to you.

Having the right support in place can aid the transition to being more independent, establishing new routines and learning techniques to plan and organise your workload at a higher education level.

This guide is informed by best practice guidance from Autism and Uni (Fabri et al. 2016) and is organised into two parts:

Getting started

All of the key information you need to get started as a student at UCL. Look out for the tick box in the corner of each page as a marker that there are important steps on these pages that you will need to complete to ensure you are set up properly.



Your life as a student

Contains detailed information of all services and contacts designed to help you get the most out of your experience as a student.

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Getting started...

Follow the steps to get set up and started as a UCL student.

START

1

Pre-enrol

Become a UCL student by pre-enrolling

You will be invited to pre-enrol as a UCL student via email once you've accepted and met the conditions of your offer, and no more than six weeks prior to the start of your programme.

You will be directed to the UCL MyAccount page to set a password for your UCL user ID. This UCL user ID will remain with you during your time at UCL. You can then log in to **Portico** (the UCL Student Information Service – see page 9 for more information) using your UCL user ID and UCL password and complete pre-enrolment. If you have any questions while completing the pre-enrolment task, details of the appropriate team to contact will be provided on each page.

2

Enrol

Make it official. Enrol in person on campus

One of your most important tasks as a UCL student is to enrol in person. Once you have enrolled, you will be able to access all of the facilities you are entitled to as a UCL student.

You will receive an email with details on when and where to enrol following pre-enrolment. If you do not receive this email please contact the New Students Team.

All new students must enrol within the two weeks prior to their programme start date. You will need to bring:

- ✓ Photo ID (preferably your passport)
- ✓ A valid passport and UK study visa if you're coming from outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland

3

Pay your fees

Work out when and how you need to pay your fees

START

Have you applied and received approval for funding from Student Finance England, Wales, Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS)?

NO

31 October

Minimum payment of 50% of your fees must be paid to UCL.

YES

You're done.

Your fees are paid (automatically, if being funded) to UCL. No further action is needed.

FINISH

1 February

Final instalment of fees due for payment.

Pay your fees online

The quickest and easiest way to manage (view amounts, deadlines etc.) and pay your fees is via Pay Online, UCL's online payment service:

▶ payonline.ucl.ac.uk



4

Arrange accommodation

UCL Managed accommodation

If you would like more information on how your application for accommodation is progressing, please contact UCL accommodation on

✉ residences@ucl.ac.uk

☎ 020 7679 6322

(Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm)

You will need to pay your residence fees each term. An email notification will be sent to your UCL email account when your invoice is available on your Portico account.

Students with ASC can request to stay in the same accommodation throughout their programme to avoid having to move. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis and can be supported by your disability advisor.

Staying in private accommodation

University of London Housing services can provide advice on finding private sector accommodation.

▶ housing.lon.ac.uk

In addition to private sector housing assistance, the University of London Housing Services runs a Property Management Unit that offers centrally-managed, self-catered accommodation.

5

Collect your ID

Your proof that you are a UCL student

The card is produced by Security Systems and you will be shown where to have your card produced after you enrol. Your photograph will be taken, so you do not need to bring a photo with you and the card will be made while you wait.

6

Set up your IT

You'll need your UCL user ID and password for this

As a UCL student you have access to central IT facilities including the online timetable, electronic library services, e-mail, Portico and Moodle (see right for more information on IT at UCL).

You will receive your UCL user ID and set your password prior to pre-enrolment.

It's a good idea to familiarise yourself with these systems before you begin your studies.

The ideal place to start is by checking your electronic timetable at

▶ timetable.ucl.ac.uk

7

And finally...

You'll need to register with your department

Both UCL and your department will run induction activities at the beginning of the academic year. These are very important to attend, as they'll overview the resources you have access to and what is expected of you during your studies.

FINISH

About IT at UCL...

Moodle

Moodle is UCL's online teaching and learning environment. You will use Moodle to take part in activities and read resources as part of your studies. It is a great way to keep in touch with your department and other students on your course, as well as get help with academic work. See the Moodle Quick Start Guide for students to get started:

▶ wiki.ucl.ac.uk/display/ELearningStudentSupport/Moodle

Portico

Portico is UCL's student information service. You'll first use Portico as part of your pre-enrolment, and be asked to use it during your time at UCL. Access Portico from any PC with your UCL user ID and password and use it to:

- Update personal details like your address and phone numbers
- Register for online modules
- Find out more about courses/modules
- View your timetable and exam results
- Re-enrol every year
- Plan and record your skills development
- Apply for graduation when you've finished your studies

▶ ucl.ac.uk/portico

Selecting modules

Modules are the individual units that make up your degree programme. Some modules are mandatory, however others might be optional depending on your programme.

Your department will let you know (usually at your introduction) when you can choose modules if you need to. There may also be a deadline for making your choices, so remember to check your email.

You will need to use Portico to choose your modules once you're able. For more information and instructions on how to register visit

▶ evision.ucl.ac.uk/hts/ucl/module_registration_student_userguide.pdf

You can also...

Other steps you can take to get started

Visit the Library

UCL Library Services provides books, journals and a range of services to support all subjects taught at UCL. Registration with UCL Library Services is automatic, following your enrolment into your programme of study.

As a disabled student you can also request a one-to-one appointment at the library to establish your support needs.

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/library/disability-support

Open your student bank account

If you do not already have a UK student bank account you should make it one of your priorities to get one as soon as possible after you arrive at UCL.

Most of the major UK banks offer student bank accounts with features designed for student life. Many banks have branches on Tottenham Court Road, a short walk from UCL.

In order to open a bank account you will need:

- A valid passport
- Proof of address
- Proof of student status – UCL Student ID card, or your Statement of Student Status

Register with a Doctor

It is highly recommended that you register with a doctor as soon as possible after you arrive in London, so that you can access healthcare as quickly as possible if you become ill or injured.

The Ridgmount Practice is a National Health Service (NHS) practice providing healthcare. More information, including registration forms and the practice welcome letter, can be found on the practice website:

- ▶ ridgmountpractice.nhs.uk

If you are a UCL student and live in a Hall of Residence you can complete the online registration form:

- ▶ campusdoctor.org.uk/ucl/reg.html

Register to vote

You have to be on the electoral register in order to vote in any UK elections. Registering takes around five minutes and you can find out more details here:

- ▶ gov.uk/register-to-vote

If you're a student and you're living away from home, you may register twice – you might be eligible to register to vote at both your home and university addresses, so you will be able to vote wherever you are at the time of an election.

Get a TOTUM card

You can apply online for a TOTUM card which entitles you to a range of discounts in shops, restaurants and the cinema. To apply visit:

- ▶ nus.org.uk

Travel information

As a full-time UCL student you are entitled to many discount schemes in London and the UK.

18+ student Oyster photocard

Full-time UCL students can apply online for a TfL Student Oyster Photocard. Cardholders are entitled to buy student-rate Travelcards and Bus & Tram Pass season tickets which cost 30% less than adult-rate season tickets.

Cycling

Cycling in London is a green and cheap way to travel to and from UCL. The roads in London can be dangerous and we advise you to use cycle lanes where they are available. UCL has bicycle parking stations across the campus. Please download the map for more details.

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/cycling/maps-and-facilities

Your life as a UCL student...

The following guide offers resources and advice aimed at helping you get the most out of your university experience.

Support

Student Support and Wellbeing

- Located at the Student Centre
- Daily drop-in sessions
- Appointments outside of those times
- Team of disability advisers, mental health co-ordinators, wellbeing advisors, mentors and specialist tutors

Support for students on the Autism Spectrum

- Liaison with academic staff about adjustments you might require including coursework extensions, extensions to library loans and support with group work
- Applications for Disabled Students Allowance
- Access to specialist equipment and software and the SENIT Suite (see right)
- Applications for special assessment arrangements
- Provision of support workers (e.g. study skills tutors, mentors etc.)

Mental Health Support

It is important to look after your mental health at university to deal with the pressures of studying and living more independently:

- Student Psychological Support Services offers support in the form of counselling, psychotherapy and CBT plus personal development workshops
- Arrange an appointment with a mental health co-ordinator through student support and wellbeing
- Receive mental health mentoring through Student Support and Wellbeing
- Receive evening and weekend solution-focused support through CareFirst over the phone or online (see contacts right)

SENIT Suite

- Specialist IT suite for students with disabilities
- Generally a quieter place to work
- Access to assistive technology and ergonomic furniture and equipment
- Located on the main campus at: B10 Lower Level of the Wilkins Building near the Print Room Cafe and the Student Shop. Appointments required through Student Support and Wellbeing

Student Support and Wellbeing contact

- ✉ student.wellbeing@ucl.ac.uk
- ☎ 020 3108 6770

Student Psychological and Counselling Services

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/student-psychological-and-counselling-services
- ☎ 020 7679 1487
- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/sps/scsreg/register
- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/evening-and-weekend-support

Academic

Academic life at university may seem quite different to what you experienced at school. You will have more independence and more autonomy over how you spend your free time.

Teaching methods

At UCL you can expect to encounter a range of different teaching methods including lectures (20–350 students), seminars (5–30 students), practical work (lab work, field trips), tutorials (group or one to one) and private study. You may find some teaching methods suit you more than others and this is something you can discuss in more detail with your Disability Advisor.

Personal Tutoring

When you start at UCL you will be allocated a personal tutor who will be available to meet with you to offer guidance on your academic progress and your personal and professional development. Your personal tutor will normally be a member of teaching staff but not necessarily teaching on your programme. Generally your tutor will arrange to see you at least once a term but you can arrange to meet more regularly as required. You may find it helpful to discuss your ASC with your personal tutor so they know how best to support you. Your personal tutor will be your contact point if you have any issues with your course or if you need to arrange an extension.

Skills4StudyCampus

Once you have your UCL username and password you can access an online resource called Skills4StudyCampus which provides interactive modules to prepare for University such as 'Time Management' and 'Exam Skills.' You can access it here:

▶ skills4studycampus.com/institution/UCL.html

Social

Social interaction can be a source of anxiety for students on the autism spectrum. The following are ideas for how to meet people.

Join a club or society

There are a large number of clubs and societies available to you at UCL. Joining a society is a great chance to meet people with similar hobbies and interests to you. The Fresher's Fair will provide an opportunity to have a look at the clubs and societies on offer and there are a number of events catered to students with disabilities, mostly run by the disabled student's network. Check their website for further details:

▶ studentsunionucl.org/make-change/representing-you/who-can-help-you/disabled-students

All of the events are accessible and there is a designated quiet hour at the welcome fair.

Autistic Peer Group

The autistic peer group is run by a UCL student every Tuesday from 5–6pm in Room G02 55-59 Gordon Square, WC1H 0NU. For further details please see:

▶ studentsunionucl.org/AutisticPeerGroup

Volunteer

It is widely documented that volunteering is good for your wellbeing. UCL offers numerous volunteering opportunities, which allows you to help yourself by helping others. It also gives you a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and can boost your CV. See here to find out more:

▶ ucl.org/services/volunteering-at-ucl

Transition Mentoring

Every first-year student is assigned a transition mentor for their first term at UCL. Transition mentors are later-year students from within your department. You will first meet your mentor during Fresher's Week at your department's 'Meet your Mentor' session. See this link:

▶ ucl.ac.uk/transition

On campus

As a student with Aspergers/ASC you may experience difficulties with tolerating background noise, crowding or other sensory aspects of the university environment.

Knowing where to go to seek some peace and tranquillity can be a vital aspect of managing your stress levels.

Orientation Tools

The UCL campus might appear confusing at first with locations spread out across a number of areas. It might be helpful to explore your regular routes in advance and perhaps make a personalised map with travel times included.

The following link provides maps of all UCL locations which you can download:

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/maps

Quiet study spaces

See this website for quiet study spaces at UCL:

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/library/libraries-and-study-spaces/quiet-study-spaces

Quiet and contemplation rooms at and around UCL

There are several contemplation/quiet rooms available for UCL members of staff and registered students. See this link to find out more:

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-areas/religion-and-belief-equality/quiet-

Looking after yourself

Food and Nutrition

It is vital to ensure that you are eating and drinking regularly, especially during busy academic periods. It can be easy to skip meals when focused on studying however this will affect your concentration so ensure that you take regular breaks. Some students with Asperger's/ASC find it difficult to adapt to new eating routines so it might be helpful to build up familiarity with local cafes and supermarkets at the start of term. Some students prefer fully catered accommodation for this reason.

Exercise

Being active is important for maintaining your health. At UCL you will have access to a range of sporting facilities and societies that you can join. If you are interested in joining a gym then there are two university gyms, Bloomsbury Fitness:

- ▶ bloomsbury.fitness/

Energybase at ULU:

- ▶ studentcentral.london/energybase/

Both offer exercise classes and gym facilities but only Energybase has a swimming pool. There are also other affordable gyms in the area.

Sleep

It is really important for you to get enough sleep during your course to assist you with managing your stress levels and the challenges of academic life. The following link provides some sleep and relaxation resources:

- ▶ ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/look-after-yourself/improve-your-sleep-and-relaxation

Contacts

UCL offers a wide range of services to help you along your way.

UCL Careers Service

Resources, events and/or 1–1 appointments for students and graduates looking for work. If you have a disability or long term health condition you can request additional support.

✉ careers.disability@ucl.ac.uk

☎ 020 3549 5900

University of London Housing Services

Assisting students and staff at contributing colleges who are looking for private accommodation.

✉ housing@lon.ac.uk

☎ 020 7862 8880

Help and Advice

Free, confidential and independent advice and support service through Students' Union UCL.

✉ su.rights.advice@ucl.ac.uk

UCL Student Funding Adviser

The Student Funding Advisers offer support, advice and guidance to students who are struggling with money management or experiencing complex funding issues.

✉ studentfunding@ucl.ac.uk

Disabled Students Network

Representing the views of UCL students who self-define as disabled.

▶ studentsunionucl.org/make-change/representing-you/who-can-help-you/disabled-students

Chaplaincy services

Based in the Student Support Office.

✉ c.bradley@ucl.ac.uk

☎ 020 3108 8942 or 07890 038722

Resources

Autism & Uni

Research initiative with useful resources for people with ASC in higher education.

▶ autism-uni.org/

Brain in Hand

Assistive technology for people with autism providing personalised support and tools to help remember activities and reduce anxiety.

▶ braininhand.co.uk/

Ambitious about Autism

National charity that offers specialist education and support for children and young people with autism. Schemes include the autism exchange which is a work experience programme for autistic young people aged 16–25.

▶ ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

National Autistic Society Autism helpline

For people with autism and their families. Monday–Thursday 10am–4pm and Friday 9am–3pm.

☎ 0808 800 4104

Emergency

Accident and Emergency Department

A&E offers support for both physical and mental health emergencies.

☎ 999

CareFirst

Counselling via telephone from 5pm–9am Monday–Friday, at weekends, during Bank Holidays and College closure periods. Online counselling also available.

☎ 0800 197 4510

Nightline

A student-run service available in term-time between 6pm–8am.

☎ 020 7631 0101

▶ nightline.org.uk

The Samaritans

The Samaritans can be contacted at any time and their service is confidential. They also operate a walk in service between 9am–9pm every day.

☎ 116 123

▶ samaritans.org.uk

The Police

In an emergency please call:

☎ 999

For non-emergency calls:

☎ 101



UCL

Student Support and Wellbeing
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT

Further information:

 study@ucl.ac.uk

 +44 (0)20 3370 1214

 ucl.ac.uk