



In this edition... Offer-Holder Visit Days, applying for student finance and accommodation, budget tips PLUS preparing for exams.

It's the start of a new year but the reality of preparing for your son or daughter to go off to university may seem like the end of an era. We hope you find our second newsletter useful, as we tackle some of the questions and queries that you might have at this stage. Remember, we are here to help and advise, so if you have any questions drop us an email at: [parents-guardians@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:parents-guardians@exeter.ac.uk)

## IMPORTANT DATES >>

**End of Feb** Student Finance application opens

**Early April** Applications for accommodation at University of Exeter opens on Monday 6 April 2020. Dates for other universities are likely to be different.

**Early May** For most applicants the deadline date for responding to offers by choice which University to making Firm and Insurance is the 8 May. However, confirmation on exact response deadlines will be shown on an applicant's UCAS Track.

## OFFER-HOLDER VISIT DAYS >>

Once your son or daughter has received all of their offers (remember this can take until the end of March), they need to decide on their Firm (first) and Insurance (second) choices. There is lots of information out there to help them make these choices, however we believe that one of the best ways for your son or daughter to decide which university is right for them is to attend an Offer-Holder Visit Day.

Benefits of attending an Offer-Holder Visit day:

- The chance to gain an insight into the university
- Look around the campus and facilities
- View some of the accommodation available
- Subject/department-level talks and activities
- Find out about the support services
- Learn about the sports and societies that are on offer

Our invitations to these days are sent direct to the offer-holder in an email and cannot be found on web pages to ensure that only offer-holders can attend. If you are booking on behalf of your son or daughter then they will need to give you access to or forward emails sent to them from their chosen universities. Applicants who have attended an interview for their programme will not receive an invite to attend an Offer-Holder Visit Day.

**If it is not possible for your child to attend an Offer-Holder Visit Day, please be assured that it in no way impacts on the offer given.**

## Are you a Nominated Contact?

Did you know that your son/daughter can nominate you (or a teacher) as a formal contact on their UCAS application? They would need to add this information to their UCAS Track account and this will allow you to contact universities on behalf of your son/daughter in order to discuss their applications status, particularly if they are away during the results period.



## APPLYING FOR STUDENT FINANCE >>

There is lots of information out there to help you and your student to navigate the process of applying for **financial support**. UCAS or Student Finance England (or Wales, Scotland, Ireland) are the best places to start to research information. If your student is from an EU or International country then UCAS also provide helpful information and advice.

In addition to covering the tuition fee costs, applicants also need to consider accommodation fees and day-to-day living costs. We advise you to consider gathering information as early as possible to help reduce any stress when they start at university.

There is a range of additional funding available for students who meet certain eligibility criteria. The **UCAS website** outlines other ways to top up your money and think about whether your son/daughter has declared any disabilities, as this might mean that additional money is available to them. Find out more about **financial support**.

## BUDGET TIPS >>

Share these tips with your child to help them manage their money at university:

- Encourage your son/daughter to do a weekly shop for the family; knowing what things cost and how to budget is an essential life skill
- Get them cooking! Cooking meals is much cheaper and a great way to make friends
- Get them to list what they spend a month on things like phone bill, toiletries, clothes, activities and travel
- Set up a spreadsheet to manage their spending
- Look for reduced items in the supermarket – what bargains can they find?

- Consider ways to cut costs travelling to and from University, such as buying advanced fare train tickets, or looking at car sharing
- Will they need a part time job? Make sure they are prepared with a CV and research the support available for finding work at the university.

## APPLYING FOR ACCOMMODATION >>

One of the top concerns for new students is where they will live. Accommodation needs to be safe, secure, and affordable, ensuring those first few weeks of university are as enjoyable as possible. Accommodation websites usually show you the full range of accommodation available. While not essential, if you have not already visited any accommodation now is a good time to start. Most universities will show you some of the accommodation they have on offer and there is plenty of choice when it comes to the type of residences available. Most student accommodation will offer en-suite rooms and there is usually a choice of catered or self-catered. There is often the choice to share a room if that is what is preferred, making rooms more affordable, but generally if students want single occupancy most places will provide this. Find out more about our **accommodation**.

## DID YOU KNOW? >>

At the University of Exeter we also have Residence Life Mentors; an older student that lives in an accommodation block who is there on hand to help with any issues a student might be facing and can provide that bit of extra support and reassurance.



## EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND EXAMS >>

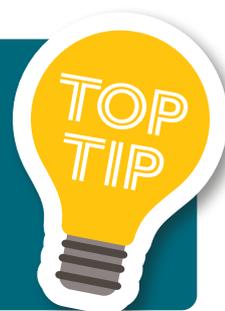
Every year, students find themselves having to deal with difficult circumstances which may have affected their performance or potentially their future exam results. We would encourage them to take the time to inform their Firm and Insurance universities. At the University of Exeter we ask applicants to complete our [Applicant Extenuating Circumstance Form](#).

From a university perspective, if you or your son/daughter feels that they will struggle to get their required grades maybe have a conversation early on about a Plan B. It may help to consider the following:

- What will they do if they don't get the grades?
- Contact the admissions office to find out what will happen on results day
- Is re-taking an option?
- Could they take a year out?

In the build up to exams, the pressure on our young people can mean that some students struggle with stress and anxiety. Information and support can be found on the [NHS web pages](#) and [Young Minds](#), alternatively we would encourage applicants to speak to someone at their school/college. We also provide self-help via our [Wellbeing Workbooks](#) which can help students to manage the pressure and anxiety they may face around studying.

Remember, many universities will have some flexibility to accept applicants who have not achieved to exact grades required, so there is a possibility that they may still get in – more about that in our next edition!!



## GET IN TOUCH >>

We hope that this second newsletter has been helpful to you. If you are supporting a young adult in applying to university and have a specific question or topic you would like covering in the future, please do get in touch.

Email us at: [parents-guardians@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:parents-guardians@exeter.ac.uk)