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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Support for Students with Caring Responsibilities

at York St John University

For more information please contact
wp@yorksja.ac.uk



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Who is a carer?

According to UCAS, the definition of a Carer is:

A Carer is anyone who has a commitment to providing unpaid care to a family member or friend who cannot cope without support. This may be due to illness, disability, a mental health issue, or substance misuse.

Caring responsibility may be short term, such as supporting someone with their recovery following an accident, or over a long-term period. This may include helping someone with a long-term illness.

Some students with caring responsibilities might think it's not worth telling the university or college they study at about their circumstances. This may be because they think it's a temporary situation, or because they don't think it is considered a caring responsibility. All Carers deal with their responsibilities alongside their education differently, but you may still find some occasional support helpful. It is important to make sure you are aware of the support available if you wish to access it at any time.

Useful link

www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/individual-needs/students-caring-responsibilities

Four top tips for carers who want to go to university

1

Do your research

Find out about the support options offered by the university before you make your final decision on which university is for you. Contact the support services directly or visit on an Open Day to discover more.

2

Talk to the University

We would advise you to talk to the university about your needs before enrolling. This can help them prepare for your arrival and make sure you get the most from your university experience. This should be done as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition. However, it is not too late to let the university know after you have received your offers or confirmed your place. If your circumstances change during your studies or after you apply, it is a good idea to inform the university.

There are many ways you can disclose your caring responsibilities to the university:

- A. Use your UCAS personal statement to highlight where your caring responsibility has enabled you to develop any strengths or skills.
- B. With your permission, a referee can mention your circumstances in the reference. They can also make sure the university knows if your caring role has had any impact on your studies or exam results (for example through absence).
- C. Contact the university directly through Student Services.

Knowing about your circumstances can help the Admissions team take your achievements into account and gain a better understanding of your potential in context. It will not reflect negatively on your application or academic ability, but instead will enable them to form a complete picture of you as an individual.

3

Personal statement

Your personal statement is an excellent place to highlight your skills, strengths, and positive attributes that your caring responsibility have allowed you to develop.

4

Making future plans

If you are planning to live at home or move away from home for your studies, we suggest you think about some of the more practical aspects. Some things to consider might be:

- **Finances** – Look at the financial support available to you from the Government and the university of your choice. There may be scholarships or bursaries available to you. When you apply for Student Finance, don't forget to check when you need to apply for any Carers bursaries or grants. Set aside time to for budgeting and consider your living costs, cost for equipment or books.
- **Travel plans** – If you plan to commute to university, think about travel times at different points in the day. Things you may want to consider are the availability and cost of parking or the accessibility of a train or bus station. Alternatively if you are planning to move away from home, how will you move your belongings to your new accommodation? Remember to build all travel costs into your budget.
- **Work placements** – If you are planning on studying a course that requires work placements or off-site learning, it is a good idea to find out in advance when these are likely to take place. This will enable you to make any necessary arrangements and update your travel plans and budget accordingly.

Benefits of Higher Education

- Gain an internationally recognised qualification
- Expand and specialise your knowledge within a chosen subject
- Develop your transferrable skills
- Increase your earning potential
- Meet new people from different cultures, backgrounds and industries
- Making use of the support available to help make the transition into university life

Support networks at York St John

Dedicated point of contact

We have a dedicated contact for student Carers in the Specialist Support Team for your time at York St John. They can chat through your situation and signpost you towards any extra support you may require or simply be a friendly face.

You can get in touch with Anna, our Specialist Support Adviser, by emailing a.deacon@yorks.ac.uk. You are given the option of disclosing your caring responsibilities on enrolment, this ensures that you are supported from the beginning of your academic career. We offer 1 to 1 support sessions to advise you how to mitigate the impact of your caring responsibilities on your academic work.

Anna can liaise with:

- Your academic teaching staff to ensure support and flexibility is provided if you wish
- Offer support with applications to the Student Support Fund and discussing other funding options
- Make referrals to Wellbeing or York Carers' Centre and other local support
- Offer advice around applications for extensions under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy. This policy recognises student Carers as a group for whom flexibility and ongoing adjustments may be needed for exams and assignments, which means you can navigate the process more easily if you need extensions or deferrals. More information on the Exceptional Circumstances policy can be found online.

yorks.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessment/exceptional-circumstances

Academic tutor

When you begin your undergraduate course at York St John, you will be assigned an Academic Tutor from your department. Your Academic Tutor will be able to guide you on various aspects of your academic studies. They are also there to help you with any wellbeing concerns you may have. They can direct you towards specific support services that the University offers. You will be encouraged to meet with them several times throughout the year to help to build and sustain a meaningful academic relationship throughout your time at university.



Study development

The Study Development team offer workshops and individual appointments to help students to develop and adapt their working methods, academic writing style or to assist with understanding assignment feedback. Small group tutorials are also offered if preferred as it can give you the opportunity to learn from your peers. Additionally self-help resources related to essay writing, exam success, critical thinking, reflective writing and avoiding plagiarism are available from the Student Development team.



The Study Development Team can be contacted by email at: studydevelopment@yorks.ac.uk

Student Funding Advice Team

The Student Funding Advice Team are available for advice on what funding is available from Student Finance and York St John University and how to apply.

The University has invested in an online money education tool called Blackbullion. This can help you learn new financial skills and can assist you to prepare for university during and after your studies. You can learn at your own pace and develop your skills to help make the right decisions in the future. Blackbullion also has a budget calculator, it is free to register.

www.blackbullion.com

The University understands that Carers responsibilities may prohibit them from undertaking part-time work, so we prioritise applications for hardship funding.

The Vice Chancellor's scholarships are open to students with caring responsibilities. More information about these can be found on our website.

yorks.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/funding-opportunities/vice-chancellor-scholarship

York St John Larder

The YSJ Larder is open to all students and postgraduate researchers who find themselves in financial difficulty for a short period of time. The larder is made up of necessities and toiletries to help support our students. YSJ Larder is located near the Information Desk in the Holgate building on our Lord Mayor's Walk campus.

More Student Funding Advice can be found online or through email.
yorks.ac.uk/students/your-finances
fundingadvice@yorks.ac.uk



Wellbeing Team

You can talk to our Wellbeing Team about any challenges that you are facing.

No matter the issue you are experiencing, they will listen and provide support and guidance. They will help you decide on your next steps.

Some areas they can help with are:

- Relationships with others
- Bullying, harassment and hate crime
- Managing worry and low mood
- Confidence and motivation
- Loss of a loved one
- Homesickness and isolation

No matter the problem, they are here to help.

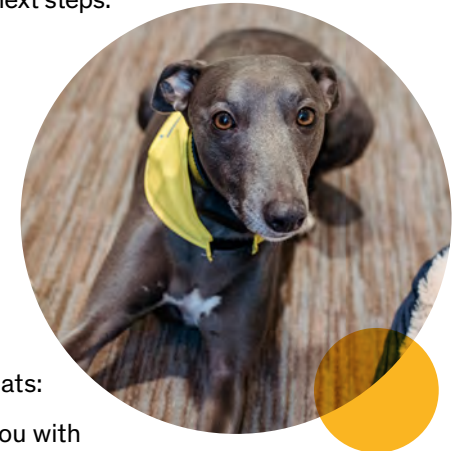
The University offers two types of online and phone support, wellbeing chats and welfare chats:

- Wellbeing chats are designed to support you with your mental wellbeing. You will work with a Wellbeing Practitioner to discuss your concerns and explore solutions together.
- Welfare chats are designed to provide support with any life challenges such as disagreements with housemates, pregnancy, or personal safety. You will be able to work with a Welfare Advisor to explore different solutions.

In addition to our wellbeing team, you can also book appointments with the university therapy dogs: Blue and Jaffa. These appointments are 15-30 minutes where you will have a 1:1 session with a member of the Wellbeing Team and therapy dog.

Useful links: <https://blog.yorks.ac.uk/outreach/student-support>

More information about the Wellbeing Team and their services can be accessed on our website.
yorks.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/wellbeing-support



Students' Union

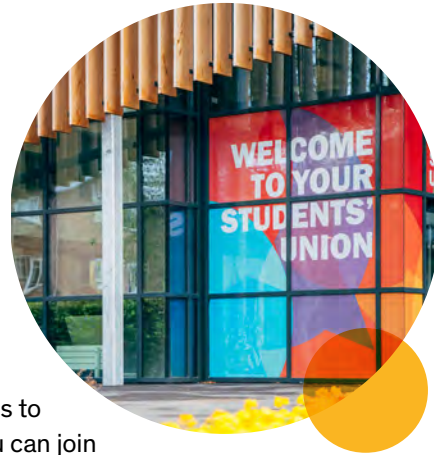
The Students' Union (SU) is at the heart of an unforgettable student experience in York and is a huge part of what student life has to offer.

They are a democratic organisation that functions to empower, represent, and entertain students. You can join a sports team, take up a new hobby, campaign for causes you care about and have a say in how the university is run.

The SU is the collective voice of students at university committees and on your course through course representatives. They also represent you at specific student groups through Chair of Schools and Liberation Officers. Every year you will have the chance to vote for the three Students' Union Presidents. They will represent you at a local, regional, and national level.

You can contact the SU for advice or support on academic issues. They can connect you with university services and specialist services.

More information about the Students' Union can be found online. [yjsu.com](https://www.yjsu.com)



Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy is committed to a loving and inclusive acceptance of people of all faiths and none.

They believe in sharing an open, honest, and respectful dialogue with one another. The chaplaincy service offers a non-judgmental space where you can chat, be alone, rest or get active. Reverend Jane Speck offers confidential pastoral care to everyone at York St John if you need someone to talk to. For anyone caring for younger siblings, there are toy boxes available in the Chapel, so if you need to talk to your tutor or other academics, you are welcome to meet in the Chapel Kitchen and bring your younger sibling or family member with you.

The chaplaincy can be contacted by email at chaplaincy@yorks.ac.uk



Accommodation

We guarantee accommodation for all first-year students if you meet our application deadlines.

Our accommodation sites are all in the centre of York, 1 mile or less from campus. We have a variety of rooms, with different facilities and prices to suit all. Living in York means nearby supermarkets, shops and the city's green spaces are all close to your accommodation. We have various accommodation styles and all our accommodation has laundry facilities.

The Accommodation Team can offer assistance for students with disabilities or additional requirements on a case-by-case basis, ranging from allocation of a fully accessible wheelchair room, to minor alterations such as supplying a fridge for medication. They can make adaptations to nearly every room that is available, depending on the requirement.

If you choose to withdraw from your accommodation due to exceptional circumstances, the policy can be found.

yorks.ac.uk/students/your-home/commuting

More information about the accommodation offered can be found online.

yorks.ac.uk/study/accommodation



Commuting students support

Many of our students commute to York St John or stay at home for their first year.

The university has a designated commuting student contact who can meet with commuting students to help manage the impact commuting to university may have on academic studies and wellbeing. You can contact the commuting student service by email: specialistsupport@yorks.ac.uk

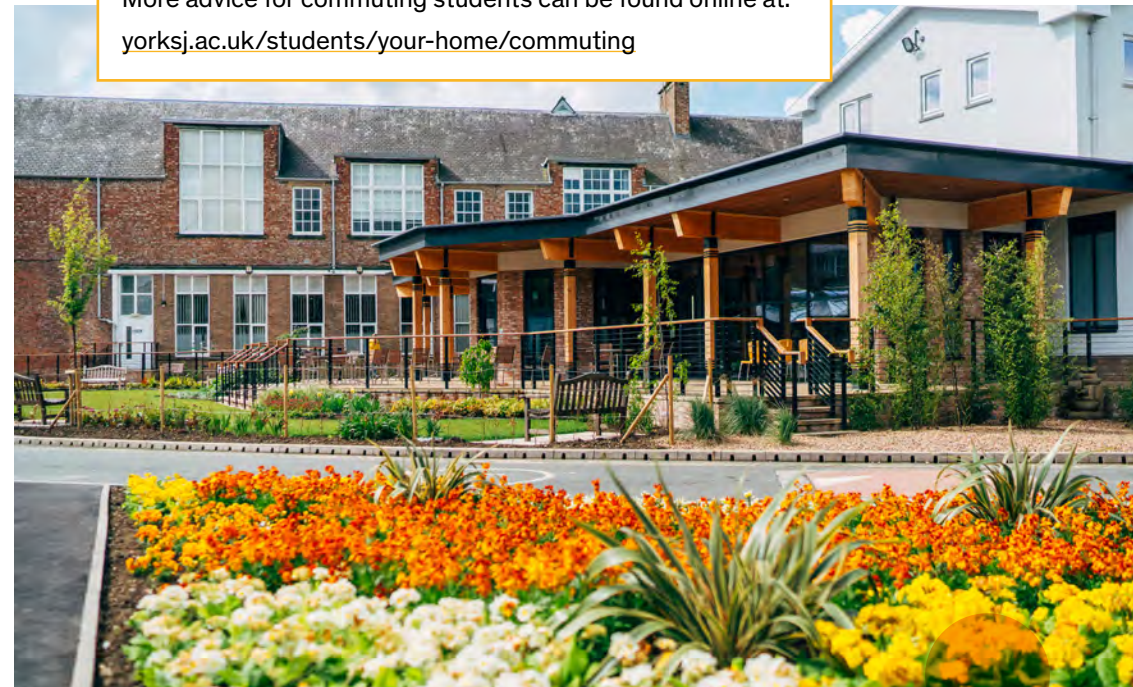
- **Travelling by car** – You can apply for a car parking permit on our website, but parking in York is limited. To find out more about this scheme, contact reception@yorks.ac.uk.
- **Travelling by bike** – The University has over 300 bike racks located across the campus, offering both open and closed facilities.
- **Travelling by public transport** – York has great public transport links, and our campus is served by several bus routes. You can also get student discount on First Bus tickets and passes. The train station is less than a mile away from our campus. There are regular train services, and we recommend buying a railcard as you can get up to 1/3 off selected rail fares!
- **Lockers** – There are a number of lockers available in the Fountains Centre and in the Foss Building if you need to store anything securely.



- **Catering Facilities** – The Student Kitchen in the Fountains Learning Centre has two microwaves and a hot water tap, perfect for making a cup of tea and heating up your lunch! Hot water is also available free of charge from all catering outlets.
- **Early Departure** – If needing to leave accommodation earlier than planned due to financial hardship, further commitment to caring, or bereavement, students can depart their accommodation earlier than the tenancy end date. You can refer to our Early Departure Policy which houses the details regarding this process.

yorks.ac.uk/media/content-assets/document-directory/documents/Early-Departure-Policy.pdf

More advice for commuting students can be found online at: yorks.ac.uk/students/your-home/commuting



Careers advice

The Careers Advice service is a team of specialist advisers who can provide guidance and support with your career aspirations.

You can speak to a Careers Advisor by either booking a careers appointment or going into LaunchPad in the Holgate building on campus. One of the best things about the Careers Advice team is that they are available for life-long career support even after you graduate.

The Careers Team offer personalised support to all our students and specifically tailor all advice, guidance, and resources. They run regular events and workshops, for example, CV and application writing and interview skills. They can also help with:

- Careers advice and guidance
- Part-time and graduate jobs
- Volunteering in the UK and internationally
- Study Abroad support for incoming and outgoing students
- Professional placements for ITE and Health programmes
- Placement Year and Year in Industry placements
- Student and Graduate internships

More Careers Advice team services can be found online or through email.

yorksj.ac.uk/careers-and-placements
careers@yorksj.ac.uk



Health service

York St John University has a health centre on campus which is part of York Medical Group. Doctors' surgeries are held regularly, and a practice nurse holds a daily clinic on a range of services. You can register with the Student Health Centre prior to your arrival at university by going online or to the health centre on campus.

More information about the health Centre and its services is available.

yorksj.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/student-health-centre

Phoneline: 01904 439101

Disability advice

The Disability Advice team offers support to students who have a disability and need extra help whilst they are studying with us.

Through the Disability Advice team, you can meet with a Disability Advisor. These are dedicated advisors for each academic school and provide advice and support with Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs), exam adjustments, student related adjustments and signposting to (and liaison with) specialist support services and academic departments. Disability advisors can also work with you to create a Learning Support Plan (LSP) or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). With your permission, they share these with other relevant members of staff, to ensure tailored support across your learning.

More services can be found below.

yorksj.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/disability-support

Student testimonials

Hear from a former student with caring responsibilities, and their experience as a student at York St John



Life as a Student Carer

I decided to come to York St John because I instantly felt the University was warm and welcoming. Being a carer to my mum, I had to feel that the University was right for me regarding my course itself and with supporting my mental health also.

I would suggest to any Carer like me, get in touch with your academic tutor when you start university. This is so that they are aware of the pressure put on you, because although you may be at university, it is hard to let go of the stress of what might be going on at home. Your academic tutor could then put you in contact with your course admissions officer who would discuss steps going forward, for example I had exceptional circumstances with my mum being diagnosed with terminal cancer. Therefore, options were available to me and things were put in place to help me cope.



Top tips from my time at York St John University

- There are scholarships available to student Carers who are going through financial hardship or have been able to demonstrate that while your family member/friend/adoptive parent may have life-long or terminal illness you have found the strength to continue with your studies. For example, one scholarship available was the Vice-Chancellor Scholarship, I was successful in my application. I would advise to apply in your first year because it would mean you would receive the grant every year of your studies, so 3 years for example.
- There are therapy dogs! I used to have a dog and being on your own at university can be lonely sometimes, especially if your loved one is poorly and it's difficult to contact them. I would advise going to the Holgate information services and they can give you the information on how to book an appointment with the therapy dogs.
- Extra funds are available to student carers who might be travelling to see their loved one every day while trying to study on campus, or if you're struggling to pay rent or eat.



Support from the local community

Outside of university, there is plenty of support available from the local community and York Council.

Take a look at some of the support available:

- Young Carers Revolution
- YC assessment of needs
- Young Carers Service (01904 715490). This service offers 1:1 support with a Young Carer Worker, monthly groups where YC's can meet up, trips and activities
- Carers emergency card
- Carers discount card
- Buttle UK



YC Assessment of needs

This is through York Council and is an assessment of needs for the young carer. This is aimed at young carers under the age of 18. You are also eligible for an assessment if you are a young adult carer (aged 18-25), or an adult carer.

The assessment is to establish your individual needs and what your local council can provide to support your role as a carer. Furthermore, the assessment may recognise additional support your loved one requires.

To apply for an assessment visit:
www.york.gov.uk/CareAssessment

Carers emergency card

If a carer looks after someone over 18, who lives in the City of York, then they can apply for a card. The scheme is for Carers who may worry about what will happen to the person they care for if they (the carer) is taken ill or has an accident or another emergency to deal with. Both the carer and the person they look after will know that an emergency plan can be put into action at any time. Carers have said that this gives them peace of mind.

For more information visit:
www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk/adult-carers/carers-emergency-card

York Carers Centre (YCC)

YCC supports Carers of all ages, there are referral pages for different ages and a professional will assess your referral.

Through these referrals, you will receive a carers emergency card, in addition to a Carers discount card.

The telephone lines are open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm (4pm on a Friday) for information and advice. There is a free evening advice line on Wednesdays from 5.00pm to 8pm on the main number: 01904 715 490.

Further support available:

- **Events** – Day trips out and evening social activities to give you a break from your caring role and an opportunity to meet other young adult carers.
- **One to one support** – a chance to have a chat, let off some steam and get any advice and support you need in relation to your caring role.
- **Opportunities to get your voice heard** – A chance to speak about the issues that affect you as a carer through forums.



Buttle UK

Students are eligible for funding under the age of 21 who are facing expectational circumstances, such as caring for a loved one.

You can apply for the grant, in addition to financial support from the university. The dedicated point of contact at university, or a social worker, will support you in your funding application.

More information available
buttleuk.org

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