ONLINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to York
Welcome to the University of York, and we are delighted that you have chosen to study with us.

Your course has been designed to inspire you to learn, and to provide you with opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and support you with the next steps in your career. At York, we want to enable you to fulfil your potential and to help you succeed. We know that you will be studying with us from all over the world, but encourage you to engage in the array of activities that we offer, make use of the help and advice that is available, and be part of our community.

Enjoy your time with the University of York.

Tracy Lightfoot
Pro-Vice Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Students
There are tasks to complete in preparation for the start of each academic year.

**Enrol**

All new and returning students need to enrol at the start of their academic year. This may be the beginning of the Autumn, Spring or Summer Term, depending on the start date of your programme of study. You can enrol online before arriving on campus. Check and make a note of your enrolment deadline. PhD students enrol on the anniversary of their first enrolment.

[evision.york.ac.uk](http://evision.york.ac.uk)

**Check your student record on e:Vision**

The system that contains your confidential student record and personal details is called e:Vision. This is also where you can request official documents, including confirmation of study and confirmation of award letters.

It’s really important that you keep your student record up to date. This is the contact information the University will use to get in touch with you. You can check and update your student record by logging into e:Vision using your IT username and password (after you have set up two-factor authentication).

[evision.york.ac.uk](http://evision.york.ac.uk)

**Get your university card**

Your University card is your proof of student status. If you visit campus, it gives access to the Library and other facilities, allows you to borrow books, and lets you print or copy resources. You may also be able to access resources from other UK libraries near you under the SCONUL Access scheme. Apply for your University card through e:Vision.

[york.ac.uk/students/studying/unicard](http://york.ac.uk/students/studying/unicard)

**Check term dates**

The academic year has three terms: Autumn, Spring and Summer. Although your work is not restricted to teaching terms, it is good to know the term dates because some services are reduced outside these dates.

**Term dates 2022/23**

- **Autumn Term**: 26 September 2022 to 2 December 2022
- **Spring Term**: 9 January 2023 to 17 March 2023
- **Summer Term**: 17 April 2023 to 23 June 2023

From September 2023, the University academic year will be split into two semesters and for the majority of courses this will replace our current three term model.

[york.ac.uk/about/term-dates](http://york.ac.uk/about/term-dates)

**PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP**

If you are having any difficulty, please contact our dedicated Online and Distance Learning support team:

[distance-learners-network@york.ac.uk](mailto:distance-learners-network@york.ac.uk)
It is important that you understand how your programme works and the standard of work expected.

There are rules and regulations governing your academic work, conduct and how to present research and contribute to team assessments. If you are an international student you may find our approach to academic integrity, referencing and plagiarism very different from that of your home country.

Your programme
Your department will supply all the information you need to understand your programme of study and how it will be delivered and assessed. They will tell you about your progression through the academic year and provide a timetable of any assessments, examinations or project completion deadlines.

Learning activities
Distance learners follow a structured programme with access to a virtual learning environment (VLE). The VLE is an online classroom and comprehensive resource centre. Depending on your programme, weekly activities could include accessing pre-recorded lectures or recorded resources, reading articles or recommended book chapters, completing online quizzes or tasks, and contributing to online discussions and forums. Expert academic support is provided by course tutors and you will also interact with fellow students.

Formative and summative assessment
You will encounter two types of assessment during your time with the University:

Formative assessment helps you to develop. While it will not contribute to your final mark, it will help you learn more effectively as you will be provided with feedback on this type of assessment which will help you improve.

Summative assessment takes into account the extent of your success in meeting the assessment criteria and how well you have fulfilled the learning outcomes of a particular module or programme. This type of assessment will contribute to your final degree mark or towards progression decisions.

Academic integrity
You must understand and demonstrate academic integrity in your studies and the work you produce. Academic integrity includes values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

It is compulsory to complete the online Academic Integrity tutorial on the Yorkshare VLE. It covers correct use of referencing and helps you to understand and avoid assessment offences such as plagiarism and collusion.

Turnitin
Turnitin is a text-matching software designed to help students integrate material into assignments correctly. You can use Turnitin after you complete the compulsory Turnitin training on the Yorkshare VLE.

Referencing
Referencing is a key aspect of academic writing and is used to clearly identify information and ideas that come from source materials. It is essential to acknowledge other people's ideas in this way so that you can avoid committing plagiarism. There are different referencing styles depending on your subject area. Our online guide to referencing contains advice and examples to help you use your department’s referencing style correctly.

york.ac.uk/integrity
Anything that stops you from continuing your studies in the usual way is called an ‘academic progress issue’. If you experience problems with your programme of study you should talk to your academic supervisor as soon as possible.

**Exceptional circumstances affecting assessment**

Sometimes things happen beyond your control that either have an impact on your performance during an assessment or prevent you from undertaking the assessment at the scheduled time. If these events are truly exceptional, i.e. serious, unusual and unpredictable, they may be classed as exceptional circumstances and you may be able to defer or re-take an assessment.

If such exceptional circumstances do occur, you must seek support from your supervisor and provide evidence as soon as possible at the time they occur. You can find the Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment claim form online, along with further information on submitting a claim.

[link](https://york.ac.uk/students/studying/progress/exceptional-circumstances)

**Appeals**

Appeals relate to decisions about your academic progress. You can appeal if you think there was a procedural error in arriving at an academic decision or that there were exceptional circumstances that the examiners didn’t know about. However, you cannot appeal against an academic judgement of your work.

[link](https://york.ac.uk/students/help/appeals)

**PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP**

**Your supervisor**

If you have a problem, talk to your supervisor. They will be able to help and guide you through the procedures involved and tell you who to contact.

**Students’ Union**

If you want to make an appeal or a complaint, the YUSU Advice and Support Centre (ASC) or GSA Advice Service provide independent and confidential advice and guidance.

[asc@yusu.org](mailto:asc@yusu.org)
[+44 (0) 1904 323724](tel:+44%201904%20323724)
[yusu.org/advice-support](http://yusu.org/advice-support)

[advice@yorkgsa.org](mailto:advice@yorkgsa.org)
[+44 (0)1904 322718](tel:+44%201904%20322718)
[yorkgsa.org/welfare](http://yorkgsa.org/welfare)
We provide a range of services and facilities to help you make the most of your studies.

The Library
The University Library provides a vast array of high quality online resources and books. Our staff are here to help via email, phone, chat, Twitter or Instagram. You can find out more about where to start on our pages for distance learners.

york.ac.uk/library/info-for/distance-learners

The University’s Library collections include over 600,000 ebooks, 19,000 e-journals and 200 bibliographic/statistical databases. Access these by logging on with your University username and password. To find the items you need, search the Library catalogue using YorSearch. If your programme/course uses Yorkshare as its virtual learning environment (VLE), you can access YorSearch and other resources from the links in the Yorkshare Library tab.

Our Scan and Send service enables you to request scans of chapters or articles by email or postal delivery of books direct to your door. Check the Library website for more information.

york.ac.uk/library/borrowing/scan-send

Students based in the UK can join the SCONUL Access scheme, a co-operative venture between UK higher education libraries. It enables distance learning students to borrow material from other libraries closer to where they live or work.

york.ac.uk/library/other-libraries/sconul

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

University Library Help Desk
The Library is open seven days a week with extensive opening hours. The Help Desk is open from 9am until 5pm, and you can send us an email or use the Chat Service, which is also available out of hours. Please contact us if you need specific help such as resources in different formats.

lib-enquiry@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323838
york.ac.uk/library

Academic Liaison Librarians
Your Academic Liaison Librarian is your main contact in the Library. They can help you identify specific resources for your subject and talk to you about tools and techniques for working effectively.

subjectguides.york.ac.uk

IT services
You will need to use the University’s IT facilities to complete assessments, access your emails and log on to the virtual learning environment (VLE).

Setting up
You should have already set up your IT account and have access to your email and the systems you need to use. If you need help or would like to know more about what’s available to you, see our information for new users.

york.ac.uk/it-services/introduction

Check your University email
You will receive all correspondence from the University, your department and your tutors through your York Gmail account. Log in using your email address and IT password.

york.ac.uk/it-services/services/email

Access York facilities off campus
• Access your filestore and a range of software packages using the Virtual Desktop Service (VDS)
• Access your files and other restricted resources using the Virtual Private Network (VPN)
• Connect to wifi when you’re out and about using eduroam, which is available at participating institutions worldwide. Log in with your York username and password.
Find out more about working off campus, including access to software and Google apps.
york.ac.uk/it-services/work-off-campus

Get connected
If you visit campus and are using your own laptop or other mobile device, you can access the University network using eduroam or use the wired sockets in the Library and various open access areas.
york.ac.uk/it-services/services/wifi

Staying secure
Make sure your personal devices, laptops, phones and tablets are updated with patches and are protected against threats such as viruses or malware. Be vigilant for email scams and phishing attacks: if the offer looks too good to be true, it usually is! The University will not ask you for passwords by email or text message, and will not send you urgent messages out of the blue. If in doubt, contact IT Services.

Two-factor authentication (2FA)
Two-factor authentication (2FA) provides an additional layer of security when you log on to IT systems from any device (e.g. laptop, desktop, phone, tablet). It’s commonly used for online services like banking and helps to protect your personal information. You’ll need to set up 2FA to access some University systems including eVision and remote access (VPN and VDS).
york.ac.uk/it-services/security

Google apps
The University uses Gmail (Google mail) together with a host of other Google apps for education such as Calendar, Google Drive and Google Meet. All students have access to these services by logging in with your email address and IT password.
york.ac.uk/it-services/google

York Print Plus (YPP)
For those who visit campus, YPP is the printing, photocopying and scanning service. A range of multifunctional devices (MFDs) are available in open spaces and offices around campus. You are able to use the YPP devices using your University card. You are given print credits every year and you can top up your account online with a debit or credit card.
york.ac.uk/yorkprintplus

Microsoft Office free to students
As a student at York you can download a free copy of the Microsoft Office suite, which you can use on up to five different devices. Your subscription will remain valid as long as you are a member of the University of York (and connect online every seven to ten days).
york.ac.uk/it-services/software

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

IT Support
itsupport@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323838
york.ac.uk/it-services

Library & IT Help Desk
lib-enquiry@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323838
york.ac.uk/library
We will help you to build, develop and perfect your academic skills.

**Your supervisor**

Supervisors are able to answer questions relating to both academic and welfare related issues. Your supervisor will be allocated early in your first term and you should ensure that a ‘catch-up’ (online or on the phone) is organised so that planning for the time ahead can begin. You will usually have a scheduled catch-up with your supervisor at least once per term, but you can contact them anytime to ask questions or get help. They can signpost you to different University support networks. See our guide to making the most of your supervisor meetings.

[link]

**Academic skills community**

Our Academic Skills Community helps students develop their academic and communication skills to a high standard. Through online resources, workshops and one-to-one consultations, academic skills staff work with all students who are interested in:

- transitioning to a different learning culture
- planning academic assignments, dissertations and theses
- developing their maths and statistics skills
- advancing their language skills to higher levels
- integrating sources and data effectively into their writing
- developing a more critical stance and developing academic argument.

**Maths Skills Centre**

The Maths Skills Centre holds online appointments for help with mathematics and statistics topics, or for more specific advice before you start a major project or tricky numerical problems.

**The Writing Centre**

The Writing Centre offers academic writing guidance and online resources for all students. Book online appointments throughout the year.

**Skills Guides**

Learn how to follow good academic practice and develop your digital skills for effective reading, note-making, essay writing and problem solving. Consult our online skills guides to find tips and interactive resources.

**Digital skills training**

We offer workshops throughout term time to help you enhance your academic and digital skills. Training includes reference management, critical skills, presentations and digital creativity.

[link]

**Time management**

Studying online may be very different from your previous studies. One of the biggest challenges is time management, as you may have work and family commitments alongside your studies. Planning your time is key. Our skills guide for time management gives top tips for managing study around other busy areas of your life and how not to stretch yourself too far.

[link]
Our ambition is to continually enhance your experience at York. Listening and acting on feedback from our students is one of the best ways to identify improvements that make a real difference. There are many ways in which we capture your thoughts and opinions on your study experience. One key way is through student academic representatives.

**Course representatives**

Course representatives are elected by students in their departmental year group to represent the views and interests of students on department committees and within GSA/YUSU. Students can go to them with any concerns or suggestions about how the department or aspects of courses are run.

Course representation is a partnership between the GSA, YUSU and the departments of the University. Together, they aim to ensure that students play an essential role in guaranteeing and driving the quality of the academic experience here.

To represent the views of fellow students and have a say in how a course is run, students stand for election annually. Contact your department to find out how students are represented within your distance learning programme.

[Find out more](yusu.org/your-voice/academic-reps)

**Find out more**

As a postgraduate, you are represented by the GSA. Find out more about what reps are, who they are, what they have achieved and how to become one.

[yorkgsa.org/representation](yorkgsa.org/representation)
You may already be in employment, and perhaps will be studying to advance your career as a requirement of your role or as a stepping stone to a career change.

Our Careers and Placements team can help you with career planning, getting experience, developing your skills and strengths, job hunting and making applications, preparing for interviews and aptitude tests, as well as providing information about further study and funding.

Whatever your employment situation, the Careers and Placements team is available to support and guide you, both now whilst you are studying and also after you have graduated. Careers and Placements provide many useful resources and services, such as interview and CV guides.

Careers Consultants are available to review job applications and personal statements and to discuss your career plans.

Quick questions can be sent directly to the team, while telephone and online appointments are available to students not in the York area.

**PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP**

**Careers and Placements**

careers@york.ac.uk

+44 (0)1904 322685

york.ac.uk/students/work-volunteering-careers/student-groups/distance-learners
We want you to get the most out of your experience and feel a sense of belonging to York, no matter where you are based.

We aim to support you in this by making sure you know where to go if you need help, and by providing resources, news, contacts, activities and a social space that are relevant to you as a distance learner. You will find study support and other resources on our dedicated online and distance learner support pages.

york.ac.uk/students/support/distance-learners

If you can’t find the answers you need, or would like to hear more about connecting with your fellow students, please contact our dedicated Distance Learning support team:

distance-learners-network@york.ac.uk

Wentworth College
York is one of a handful of universities with a college system and our colleges provide a focus of community, networking and support. As a postgraduate student, you are welcome to participate in Wentworth College activities, regardless of what college you are actually a member of. If you live locally or visit York at any time during your studies, you are welcome to make use of college facilities. The college also acts as an additional resource for support if you need help.

york.ac.uk/colleges/wentworth

Student services
Student Services are the central point of contact within the University for administrative processes relating to current students. They deal with matters relating to:

• enrolment
• academic progress
• completion
• student records
• official correspondence

student-hub@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324643
york.ac.uk/student-hub

Students’ unions
Both of the main student organisations, University of York Students’ Union (YUSU) and the Graduate Students’ Association (GSA), can be contacted via email, phone, their websites or social media.

GSA
info@yorkgsa.org
+44 (0)1904 322718
Yorkgsa.org
@GSAYork

YUSU
enquiries@yusu.org
+44 (0)1904 323724
yusu.org
@yorkunisu
We have a wide range of people and services that can help if you run into difficulties.

**Academic supervisor**
Your academic supervisor will provide guidance and advice on your academic work and progress. They can also support your personal development and wellbeing, referring you to specialist advisers or self-help resources where appropriate.

**Practical Matters**

**Student Hub**
The Student Hub is a first point of contact to help you find any support and advice you may need during your studies. Advisers in the Student Hub can help with many practical matters such as housing advice, financial support and money management, academic progress issues, official University letters, and more.

*york.ac.uk/student-hub*

**Disability support**
Disability can arrange academic support and adjustments if you have a physical or mental health disability, Specific Learning Difficulty, or long term health condition that has an impact on your ability to study.

*york.ac.uk/students/support/disability*

**Student financial support**
The Student Financial Support team assists students who run into financial difficulties due to unexpected and unforeseeable circumstances.

*york.ac.uk/students/finance*
If you find things difficult, it is important to know that you do not have to struggle alone. There are lots of people ready to listen and help you.

**Togetherall**
You can access free online support with Togetherall, an anonymous 24/7 online global community with support from trained professionals.

**Open Door**
Open Door provides a range of self-help materials to aid your personal development and wellbeing as well as a professional confidential one-to-one service for students experiencing mental health issues.

**Nightline**
Nightline is a confidential listening and information service run independently by students for students. It is open from 8pm to 8am every night during term time.

**Faith contacts**
Our chaplains will speak in confidence with any student, regardless of faith or belief. They have a network of contacts with other faiths and provide spaces for prayer and reflection on campus.

*york.ac.uk/students/health/help*
All distance learners are very welcome to visit the University at any time – to visit your department or college, or just to see the campus and our famous ducks and geese!

Support

Contact the Distance Learning Support team to arrange a tour of campus or recommend activities that are running during your visit.

Distance Learning Support Team
distance-learners-network@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323003

If you are an international student requiring a visa to visit campus or attend your graduation, our Immigration Advice Service can assist you.
york.ac.uk/internationalsupport

See our maps and directions web pages for location and travel information.
york.ac.uk/about/transport-maps-parking

Accommodation

If you are considering visiting campus outside of any programmed residential element of your programme, you may wish to consider booking accommodation with us.

Bed and breakfast facilities are available all year round in Franklin House based in Alcuin College. For more information, contact STEM on +44 (0)1904 328364 or email reception@stem.org.uk.

Hostel accommodation is available at Halifax College during selected weeks within vacation periods. See York Conferences for more information.
yorkconferences.com/accommodation
Regulations and discipline
When you enrol, you agree to accept and abide by the University Regulations. You should make sure you are familiar with Regulation 7: Student Discipline, and the associated procedures, which details the sorts of behaviour which are unacceptable in our community and explain our procedure for taking disciplinary action. We aim to maintain a community of respect in which students and staff can study, work and live safely together. We hope that your time at the University will not be affected by problems of misconduct, but you can find all the information you might need on our website.

york.ac.uk/student-misconduct

Complaints
You can complain about a service you have received as a student within the University.

york.ac.uk/students/help/appeals/student-complaints

Health and safety services
We aim to ensure that all students and staff can work in a safe and healthy environment.

york.ac.uk/admin/hsas

Data protection
The University collects, uses, stores and shares certain types of personal data, in various formats, about its current and past students in order to fulfil its functions as an education provider and to maintain its lifelong relationship with its alumni community. In doing so, it complies with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. See further information on how the University uses your data and the various rights you have on our website.

york.ac.uk/records-management/dp/your-info
At the start of the year

**Enrolment queries**
student-records@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 322136
york.ac.uk/students/studying/enrolment/distance-students

---

**Opportunities**

**Careers and Placements**
careers@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 322685
york.ac.uk/careers

---

**Support and wellbeing**

**Student Hub**
student-hub@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324140
york.ac.uk/student-hub

**Disability**
disabilityservices@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324785
york.ac.uk/disability

**Student finance**
york.ac.uk/students/finance

**Health and wellbeing help and support contacts**
york.ac.uk/students/health/help

---

**Visiting campus**

**Travel, transport and parking**
york.ac.uk/students/travel

**Campus map**
york.ac.uk/map

---

**Social media**

To find out the latest University news and events, or to ask a question when you don’t know who to ask, try our social media channels.

@ /uniofyork
/ universityofyork
@ uniofyork

/YUSU
@ /YorkGSA
@ GSA York

Find more University of York social media contacts at:
york.ac.uk/social

---

**Academic life**

**Department contacts**
york.ac.uk/about/departments/academic

**YUSU Advice and Support Centre**
ascc@yusu.org
+44 (0)1904 323724
yusu.org/advice-support

**Graduate Students’ Association**
+44 (0)1904 322718
yorkgsa.org

**Library**
lib-enquiry@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323838
york.ac.uk/library

**IT Services**
itsupport@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 323838
york.ac.uk/it-services

**Academic Skills Community**
academic-skills-community@york.ac.uk
york.ac.uk/students/studying/skills