



Student Services

Winter Support Guide 2021

With the winter now upon us and the festive holiday period nearly here Student Services know that this can be a time of year filled with joy but also difficulties. At Student Services, we are here to support you. We recognise that this may be a challenging few weeks and months ahead and we are here for you, even when the offices may be closed.

We have assembled a range of resources for you in the guide below to carry on supporting you - we hope you find them helpful.

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Connecting with others and activities

Connecting with others

The season may be cold, but warmth can be found in the company of others, particularly those who have a shared interest. If you are finding it hard to meet new people, remember many other students will feel the same way. Here are some suggestions to help you get started:

- [Societies at London Met](#) – The London Met Student Union provides advice and links to a range of societies.
- [Connecting with other students](#) – Mind provides some useful tips and advice to help you connect with others.
- [Online festive parties](#) – Visit the Eventbrite website to find a festive party.



Things to do over the festive period

Films, television and music can provide great entertainment, but there are many other things you could try. For example, why not get involved in community activities such as volunteering?

- Volunteering advice from London Met – Email volunteering@londonmet.ac.uk for advice and guidance or check out voluntary roles on [MyCareer](#).
- [Volunteer with FareShare](#) – FareShare matches volunteers to roles that support the community.
- [Volunteer to help the NHS](#) - NHS Volunteer Responders have a range of roles available, all of which help the local community. This could be collecting a prescription or shopping for food and essentials for those who are vulnerable in our community.
- [Jacksons Lane](#) – Is an arts and cultural organisation in Haringey with strong community links. They are looking for volunteers to help make meals, deliver hampers, wrap bows and plenty of other things before December 25th.
- [East London Lines](#) – Is a charity running a virtual Christmas dinner for care leavers in east London. The charity is currently appealing for volunteers to help deliver their event.

Or maybe explore your gardening skills?

- [RHS Inspiring everyone to grow](#) – Top tips to get growing, features, inspiration and other useful growing resources.

Food

Cooking can benefit the body and mind, and it is a great way to share time with others. Why not brush up on your cooking skills, or develop a new 'signature dish'?



- [BBC Festive Recipes](#) - Take the stress out of festive food preparation with simple yet scrumptious recipes, from easy roast turkey to no-fuss mince pies.
- [Classic Christmas menu](#) – A BBC good food guide.
- [Delicious Festive Recipes](#) - 25 quick Christmas recipes that will 'save the day'.

Help to bring down the cost of food by setting up a food cooperative with your neighbours:

- [Cooperation Town](#) – Is a network of community-led food co-ops, providing free and affordable food. For more information see the [Cooperation Town resources webpage](#) or download their free [information pack](#).

Reading and movies

The winter break provides a great opportunity to catch up on that book you have been meaning to read or watch that film that has been on your watch list all year.

- [The Independent Top 20 ranked Christmas films of all time](#) – You might agree (or you might not). However, it will certainly give you some ideas!
- [Teleparty](#) - If you want to watch movies or TV boxsets with friends then why not download Teleparty, a Google Chrome extension (works with Netflix, Disney, Hulu and HBO streaming services).
- Apple [FaceTime Shareplay](#) allows you to watch movies and shows and listen to music together during calls.
- [Find out how Christmas is celebrated around the world](#).

Looking for something that isn't festive?

- [Pure Wow Book Club](#) – An Instagram book club with tips and posts to help you find a good book.
- [Project Gutenberg library](#) of over 60,000 free eBooks.
- [London Met Library](#) – Links to University Library resources and also [other library and archive catalogues](#).

Music

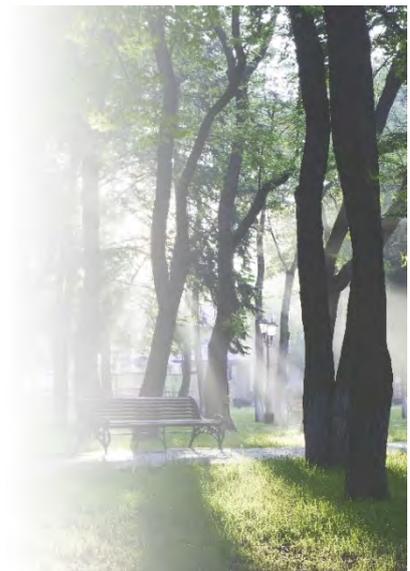
Create a soundtrack that helps lift your mood, so you don't have to listen to seasonal tunes all through the festive period.

- [Online music guide](#) – A Money Saving Expert guide to online music resources.

Health and Fitness

Being active is an important part of maintaining health and wellbeing. The resources below provide advice, guidance and links to a range of resources that can help you to be active.

- [London Met Fitness and Recreation Team](#) – Advice and guidance for health and wellbeing.
- ['Ourparks' - Get fit for free](#) – Find a register for a free fitness class in a local park.
- [London Guided Walks](#) – Find a walk over the festive period.
- [Sports Clubs Finder](#) - Despite the cold weather, the holidays present a great opportunity to take up a new sport, or get back into an old one. BBC Sport has produced a list of club finders for different sports and activities.
- [Find a walk](#) - Along with sport, walking is good for both physical and mental health. A full map of UK walks and routes can be found through Ramblers.
- [Fitness and exercise apps](#) - Healthline have compiled a list of the best fitness and exercise apps, including home workouts if you prefer to stay indoors.



Support and Wellbeing

Mental Health support

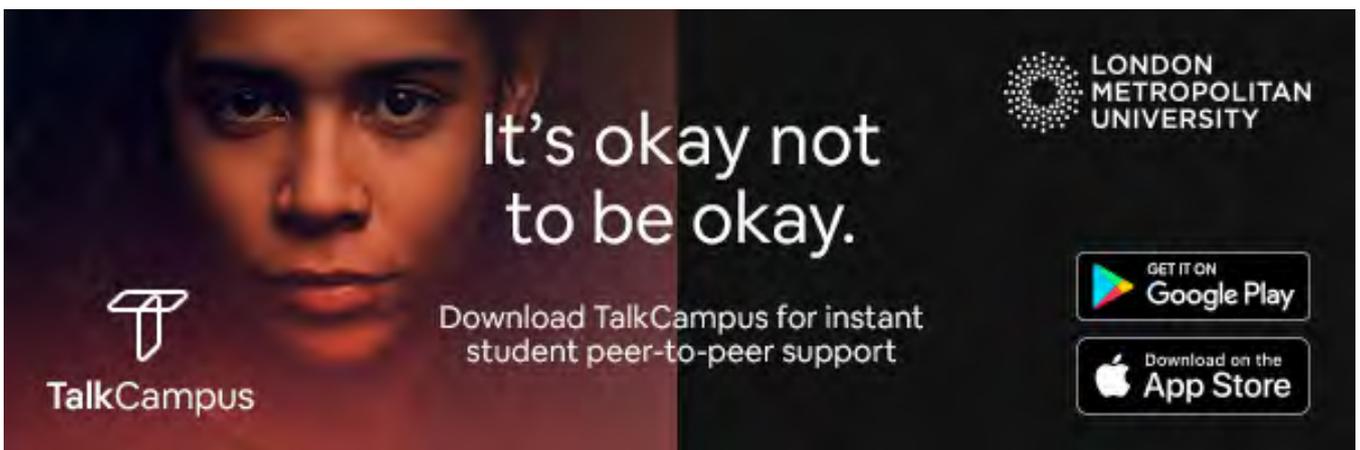
These are uncertain and unprecedented times. The continued presence of Covid-19, and its impact on our lives, can be insidiously traumatizing. To manage our emotions well, we need to work extra hard and often in isolation. Expect to have a lot of mixed feelings. Naturally, we feel anxiety, and maybe a sense of panic, particularly when exposing ourselves to the media or changes in our immediate circumstances.

Our anxiety, and resulting vigilance, is helping us cope, bond together from a physical distance, and slow the spread of the virus. While uncomfortable, our anxiety is a good thing right now, especially if we manage it well. At the same time, we must strive to prevent panic contagion and create periods when we can be screen-free and calm, engaging our attention in normal daily activities.



Virtual mental health support

- [TalkCampus app](#) - Get instant support for your mental health any time, day or night.



It's okay not to be okay.

Download TalkCampus for instant student peer-to-peer support

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Student life can be incredibly tough. At TalkCampus we are here for the moments when you just need a friend. Talk anonymously to students from universities and colleges around the world going through the exact same struggles you are any time of day or night.



[Student Space](#) is here to make it easier for you to find the support that you need during the coronavirus pandemic.

However you're feeling, help and guidance is available. Explore a range of trusted information, services and tools to help you with the challenges of student life.

The support provided by Student Space is safe, confidential and developed with students and

experts in student wellbeing and mental health. There is a wealth of guidance on studying and top tips for support over the festive break.

Resources you can go to if you are feeling anxious, lonely or low which can offer you both practical and emotional support:

- [Free Psychotherapy Network](#) - The Free Psychotherapy Network are offering online groups for people living in the UK who are isolated during the Covid pandemic. The network particularly reaches out to people who have few resources or opportunities for support, conversation and connectedness during this uncertain and frightening time.
- [The Help Hub](#) - The Help Hub has been set up to support individuals who find themselves with limited contact due to Covid-19. It is led by a group of qualified therapists who are giving their time freely to help people in this situation offering 20-minute chats on Skype, FaceTime or on the telephone.
- [Calm.com](#) - Without a doubt, many of us are feeling anxious as we navigate the uncertainty of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Enjoy a free curation of meditations, sleep stories, music and more, all hand-picked to support your mental and emotional wellness through this time.
- [Rethink Mental Illness](#) - An exciting mental health service for people aged 18 years and over who live, work or study in the 5 London Boroughs of Camden, Islington, Enfield, Barnet and Haringey. The service is free and confidential, and no referral is required.
- [Moodzone](#) - NHS portal with a variety of self-help resources from general information about recognising anxiety symptoms, accessing therapeutic support, e.g. CBT, Counselling, to links on improving general wellbeing through [regular exercise](#), eating healthily, avoiding substance misuse, e.g. caffeine, [alcohol](#) and [smoking](#), or seeking support through support groups such as [No Panic](#).
- [Mind.org.uk](#) - Support and resources to help cope with anxiety, depression and loneliness.
- [Crises support](#) – If you need help for a mental health crisis, emergency or breakdown, you should get immediate expert advice and assessment.
- [Befrienders Worldwide](#) - Find listening and support services wherever you are in the world with Befrienders Worldwide.

Carers Support

If you are a carer and need help and support, please see the advice and resource links below. It is important to look after yourself if you look after others.

- [Practical tips if you care for someone](#) – An NHS guide.
- NHS Carers Direct (0300 123 1053) - Offers support and help for carers - Helpline and webchat open: Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm and weekends, 11am to 4pm
- [Carers UK](#) (0800 808 7777) – Carers helpline open: Monday and Tuesday, 10am to 4pm
- [Carers UK guide](#) – Looking after someone.
- Careline, a crisis telephone helpline (020 8514 1177) - Open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm and 7pm-10pm.
- Supportline (020 8554 9004) – A helpline offering emotional support to any individual on any issue. The helpline is primarily a preventative service and aims to provide support before the point of crisis.
- [Forward Carers](#) – Support for Carers over the Christmas period.
- [Alzheimer's Society](#) – Christmas advice for people affected by dementia. Dementia Connect support line (0333 150 3456).

Family support

Winter is an expensive time of year for all. The good news is there is support out there if you know where to look. Here are some of our best recommendations:

- [Trussell Trust find a food bank](#) - Food banks are grassroots, community organisations aimed at supporting people with the essentials in life. The Trussell Trust provides a search facility to help you find a local foodbank.
- Families who qualify for free school meals report the financial burden of feeding the family during the holidays can be stressful. There are many schemes run by local councils who work hard to combat holiday hunger by offering free hot meals. At the time of print, some local councils had not finalised their dates but a quick google search of free hot meals for children Xmas 2021 will bring your nearest ones up.
- [Surestart](#) - Check out your local Surestart Centre for support and activities over the holidays and term time. Our local centres, [Islington](#) and [Tower Hamlets](#) both offer a fantastic programme of free activities and support.
- [Parent House](#) - London Met is proud to have made links with the wonderful and supportive Parent House who offer a mentoring programme and a diary of social events and support for Islington based parents.
- [Free Islington parenting programmes](#) – Excellent online courses for parents and carers.
- [Our Place courses](#) - As a London Met student, you can access all these courses for free by entering the passcode Bright start and using the university Holloway Road postcode - N7 8DB
- [Cold weather payment](#) - Make sure you claim all the financial support available to you. If you are in receipt of benefits listed in the link, you can apply for support towards your heating costs.
- [Free things to do with kids over the winter break](#) - You don't have to spend money to make memories with your family. Pack a picnic and a flask and try some of this list of free things to do with kids in London.

Estranged students and care leavers

The Student Money and Accommodation Team have dedicated named contacts if you are estranged or a care leaver. We are here to help your time at University go as smoothly as possible but there may be times when you need that extra bit of support. Please see the links to our information sheets and the help available.

- [Care leavers information sheet](#)
Care Leaver contact – Dan McEvoy
- [Estranged students information sheet](#)
Estranged Students contact - Isabel Patrick
- [‘Stand Alone’ festive guide](#) – A guide to help with some of the most common festive frustrations and give you an idea of how others in the community cope with the season.
- [Stand Alone events for estranged students.](#)
- [‘Unite’ support for care leavers and estranged students](#)
- [‘Become’](#) – Advice for care leavers and those in care. Freephone (0800 023 2033).
- [Blackbullion Library](#) - View and read some money tips through the blackbullion Library, you may pick up some handy tips over the festive period.

International students who are not travelling home

While it may be difficult to be away from friends and family, don't forget that you can still see them virtually. You may find it fun to organise a menu with food and drinks and pick an online platform. Then, arrange for everyone to get their ingredients and all gather online to cook a meal together that you can enjoy together (virtually) when you're done. This is a great way to keep you in touch with your loved ones and you may even learn a new dish or two! Arrange online dinner and drinks, games or even a karaoke session!

- [Hosting a virtual party](#) – A Taste of Home guide.
- [Play online boardgames](#) – A Wired guide.
- [Online party games with friends](#) – A Time Out guide.
- [Christmas markets in London](#) - A Visit London guide.
- [Great bus routes for sightseeing](#) - if it's too cold to walk, jump on a London bus to take in some of the best bits of the city.
- [Free attractions in London](#) - you may want to spend some of your free time visiting attractions in the city.
- [Speakerbox Street Party](#) - A group of activists and artists who organise street parties in the Square at Piccadilly Circus every Saturday and Sunday from 4pm.
- [International Students House](#) - Check out all the exciting events organised by the International Students House this Christmas
- [Giant advent calendar](#) - The Nine Elms area transforms into a giant advent calendar (1 December 2021-5 January 2022), with 24 venues each hosting a different art installation for the public to visit, from collages to peace walls to a living forest. Two routes have been drawn up so you can visit the installations on foot, at your leisure — and one will be showcased online each day, if you can't make it to Nine Elms in person.

- [Selfridges Christmas Market](#)
- [A student's guide to Christmas in London](#) – A Top Universities guide to locations and events in London.
- [Welcome to London](#) – A Visit London guide to locations and events in London, including experiencing London from home.
- [Christmas in London 2021](#) - A Visit London guide.

Free online courses - If learning is more your interest there are many online resources for fascinating courses such as:

- [Harvard University Free Online courses](#)
- [Open Learn from the Open University](#)

Travel Advice - If you are thinking about taking a short trip during the break, either to visit family or just for a holiday, you will need to ensure you follow current [guidelines for travel](#).

For more information please read our Travel Advice guide which can be found on the [International Support Team website](#).

At risk of being made homeless?

Please review the advice and resources below if you are concerned about being made homeless.

- ['Crisis'](#) – A national charity offering advice and support for homeless people.
- ['Advice Now'](#) - A survival guide to what to do if you are threatened with homelessness
- [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) – A Gov.UK guide.