THE ELEVATION BOARD

ELEVATION CAMPUS OUTREACH

UNIVERSITY SURVIVAL GUIDE

*Your practical guide to thriving—not just **surviving**—university*

12 ESSENTIAL AREAS EVERY STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW TO THRIVE



A **FREE** RESOURCE
FROM THE ELEVATION BOARD

ACADEMIC SUCCESS | PERSONAL GROWTH | FAITH & VALUES | FINANCES & LIFE SKILLS | CAREER & PURPOSE | COMMUNITY & WELLBEING

LEARN GROW CONNECT LEAD IMPACT

Your practical guide to thriving—not just surviving—university

12 things every university student needs to know to make the most of their university journey.

A free resource from The Elevation Board

Welcome to Your University Journey

Starting university is exciting. It can also feel overwhelming.You may be moving away from home for the first time, meeting people from completely different backgrounds, managing your own money, making important decisions and discovering what you actually want from life.

University is more than lectures, assignments and exams.

It is a season of **growth, discovery, relationships, independence and preparation for the future.**

This guide has been created by **The Elevation Board (TEB)** to help you navigate that journey intentionally.

You don't need to have everything figured out on your first day.

You simply need to be willing to learn, ask questions, make wise choices and keep growing.

How to Use This Guide

Don't just read it—**use it.**

Write in it. Complete the exercises. Set goals. Review your progress.

Some sections will help you solve immediate problems. Others will challenge you to think about the person you are becoming.

Keep coming back to this guide throughout your first year.

Don't just aim to survive university. Aim to leave university better prepared, more confident, more purposeful and better equipped to make an impact.

Welcome to university. Welcome to your next level.

Welcome to The Elevation Board (TEB).

1. Welcome to University

Your university journey starts before your first lecture.

University may be very different from what you imagined.

You have more freedom—but with that freedom comes responsibility.

Nobody may remind you to attend your 9 a.m. lecture. Nobody may check whether you have started your assignment. Nobody may tell you that you are spending too much money or spending too much time with the wrong people.

University gives you freedom to choose—and those choices shape your experience.

What Should You Expect?

Your first few weeks may involve:

- Freshers' events and welcome activities
- Meeting hundreds of new people
- Finding lecture halls and navigating campus
- Learning how your course works
- Managing your own timetable
- Registering with university services
- Joining societies and student groups
- Exploring your new city
- Learning to live independently
- Experiencing homesickness or culture shock

You don't have to do everything.

Give yourself permission to settle in gradually.

2. Freshers' Week: Don't Feel Pressured

Freshers' week can feel like everyone else is having the perfect university experience. They're not.

Some people will make friends immediately. Others will take weeks or months.

Some will love every event. Others will find large social gatherings exhausting.

Some will know exactly what they want to study and pursue. Others will still be figuring themselves out.

Don't compare your beginning with someone else's highlight reel.

Go at a healthy pace.

3. Your Independence Matters

University is an opportunity to develop practical life skills.

Learn to:

- Manage your money
- Cook basic meals
- Keep your accommodation clean
- Organise your time
- Make appointments
- Communicate professionally
- Ask for help
- Make decisions
- Take responsibility for your mistakes

These are not “extra” skills.

They are part of becoming an adult.

YOUR FIRST-WEEK CHECKLIST

- Find your main lecture buildings
- Download/access your university timetable
- Find the library
- Locate student support services
- Find your students' union
- Explore your local area

- Meet at least one new person
- Attend an event or society meeting
- Save important university contact numbers
- Create a realistic weekly routine

TEB REFLECTION

What do I want my university experience to be known for?

_____

_____

Three things I want to achieve during my first year:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

_____

4. Build Different Types of Relationships

Your network is part of your university education.

One of the most valuable things you can build at university—alongside your degree—is a healthy and diverse network of relationships.

You don't need every friend to fulfil the same role. Different relationships contribute different things to your growth.

Think intentionally about building a network that includes:

✔ PEERS — People Who Walk with You

These are people navigating university alongside you: course mates, flatmates, society members and friends.

Good peers can make the journey easier. You can study together, exchange ideas, encourage one another, share opportunities and navigate challenges together.

Look for peers who are not only enjoyable to be around, but who also encourage you to grow.

✔ MENTORS — People Who Guide You

A mentor is someone with greater experience who can help you see what you may not yet be able to see for yourself.

This might be:

- A lecturer or tutor
- A postgraduate student
- A professional in your chosen field
- A trusted faith or community leader
- An older student
- Someone already doing what you hope to do

Don't approach mentorship simply by asking, *"Will you be my mentor?"*

Start by learning. Ask thoughtful questions. Attend events. Seek advice. Apply what you learn. Stay in touch.

Some of the best mentoring relationships develop naturally over time.

✔ PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS — People Who Expand Your Horizon

University gives you access to people and opportunities you may never encounter again in quite the same way.

Lecturers, visiting speakers, alumni, employers, researchers, entrepreneurs and professionals can all become part of your developing network.

Attend career fairs. Go to conferences. Create a professional online presence. Speak to guest lecturers. Ask about internships, placements and work experience.

You are not trying to collect contacts.

You are learning to build genuine professional relationships.

✔ COMMUNITY — People Who Help You Belong

Everyone needs somewhere they can belong.

Your community may come through a society, sports team, cultural group, volunteering organisation, church, faith community or another shared-interest group.

Find people with whom you can laugh, learn, serve, celebrate and grow.

But remember:

Belonging should never require you to lose yourself.

5. Watch Your Circle

Everybody can be treated with respect, but not everybody needs access to your inner circle.

University will introduce you to many different personalities, lifestyles, beliefs and perspectives. Learning to relate respectfully to people who are different from you is an important part of growing up.

However, being friendly with someone does not mean they automatically need to become a close friend.

Pay attention to the character of the people you allow to influence you.

Healthy relationships often include people who:

- Respect your boundaries
- Encourage healthy choices
- Celebrate your progress without unhealthy competition
- Tell you the truth when you need to hear it
- Respect your beliefs and values even when they differ from theirs
- Encourage your academic and personal development
- Can disagree with you respectfully
- Support you during difficult seasons
- Take responsibility when they get things wrong

- Allow you to be yourself

Be equally alert to relationships that repeatedly pressure you to compromise your values, neglect your studies, overspend, engage in unsafe behaviour or become someone you don't want to be.

Ask yourself occasionally:

Who am I becoming because of the people around me?

Friendship is powerful.

Choose your inner circle wisely—and be the kind of friend you would want in your own circle.

6. If You Feel Lonely

Connection can take time.

You can be surrounded by thousands of students and still feel lonely.

Perhaps you have moved away from home for the first time. Maybe your closest friends are studying elsewhere. You may be an international student adjusting to a new country and culture. Or perhaps everyone around you seems to have already found their friendship group.

Don't assume that you are the only person feeling this way.

Many friendships that eventually become significant do not begin during Freshers' Week.

Give relationships time to grow.

And rather than waiting for someone to discover you, take small intentional steps towards connection.

GO → JOIN → SPEAK → PARTICIPATE → RETURN

GO: Leave your room and go somewhere people are gathering.

JOIN: Try a society, club, volunteering opportunity, study group or faith community that genuinely interests you.

SPEAK: Start a conversation. A simple *"Hi, what course are you studying?"* can be enough.

PARTICIPATE: Don't remain permanently on the edge. Volunteer, contribute, attend activities and get involved.

RETURN: This may be the most important step.

Go back.

Familiarity develops through repeated encounters. People begin to recognise you. Conversations become easier. Acquaintances gradually become friends.

Friendships often develop through repeated connection, not one perfect conversation.

When Loneliness Feels Bigger Than Loneliness

Sometimes persistent loneliness can begin to affect your mood, sleep, studies or ability to function.

You don't have to manage that alone.

Speak to someone you trust and make use of the wellbeing, counselling, student support or healthcare services available through your university or local community.

Asking for support is a wise use of the resources around you.

TEB RELATIONSHIP CHECK-IN

Take a moment to think about your current relationships.

Who walks alongside me?

Who can guide or mentor me?

Who is helping me grow professionally?

Where do I experience healthy community and belonging?

What kind of influence is my current circle having on me?

What kind of influence am I having on others?

YOUR TEB CHALLENGE

This week don't just wait for connection—create an opportunity for connection.

☐ **Introduce yourself to someone new**
☐ **Attend one society, community or faith-based activity**
☐ **Have a conversation with someone outside your usual circle**
☐ **Identify someone you could learn from**
☐ **Check in on someone else who may be feeling lonely**
☐ **Follow up with someone you recently met**

TEB TAKEAWAY

Build relationships that give you somewhere to belong, people to learn from, opportunities to grow—and the freedom to become the person you were created to be.

YOUR COMMUNITY PLAN

Three communities I want to explore:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

One person I would like to learn from:

One thing I can do this week to meet someone new:

TEB CHALLENGE

Don't wait for community to find you. Go and find community.

This week:

- Attend one student event

- Introduce yourself to someone new
- Explore one society
- Speak to someone on your course
- Identify one potential mentor
- Stay connected with someone you meet

7. Your journey doesn’t end here

You Don't Have to Navigate University Alone

If you have reached the end of this guide, we hope you are leaving with more than information.

We hope you are leaving with **clarity, confidence, practical tools and a greater sense of possibility** about the journey ahead.

University will have its exciting moments and its difficult ones. There will be achievements to celebrate, decisions to make, friendships to navigate, opportunities to pursue and perhaps a few moments when you wonder whether you have what it takes.

In all of those seasons, remember:

You don't have to do the journey alone.

That is one of the reasons **The Elevation Board exists.**

8. Welcome to the Elevation Board

A Community to Learn. Grow. Connect. Lead. Impact.

The Elevation Board (TEB) is a development and mentorship community committed to helping students, young adults and emerging professionals become well-rounded individuals who are equipped to thrive in every area of life.

We believe education should give you more than a qualification.

We want to help you develop the **character, competence, confidence, relationships, values and sense of purpose** you need to make a meaningful difference wherever life takes you.

TEB is a place where you can:

- **Learn** practical skills for university, career and life
- **Grow** personally, academically, professionally and spiritually
- **Connect** with a positive community of students, mentors and professionals
- **Discover** your strengths, gifts and purpose
- **Prepare** for life beyond university
- **Lead** with character, excellence and integrity
- **Impact** your campus, profession and wider community

Whether you are just beginning university or already thinking about what comes after graduation, **there is a place for you at The Elevation Board.**

9. How TEB can support your journey

TEB 90

90 Days to Elevate Your University Journey

Your first few months at university can shape much of what follows.

TEB 90 is a free three-month development journey designed to help you intentionally navigate your first 90 days at university.

Over the 90 days, we help you think about areas such as:

SETTLE
Adjust to university life, understand your environment, establish healthy routines and begin building your community.

BUILD
Develop strong academic habits, relationships, confidence, life skills and personal discipline.

ELEVATE
Begin thinking beyond the semester—towards purpose, leadership, employability, personal development and impact.

You don't simply arrive at university.

You learn how to thrive there.

TEB mentorship and development

Sometimes information isn't enough. You need people.

Through TEB mentorship and development opportunities, you can learn from people who have already travelled parts of the journey ahead of you.

Our programmes are designed to help you develop in areas including:

- ✔ **Purpose & Identity**

  Understanding who you are, your strengths and the contribution you can make.

- ✔ **Leadership**

  Learning to influence, serve, communicate and lead with integrity.

- ✔ **Personal Development**

  Building confidence, emotional intelligence, discipline and resilience.

- ✔ **Academic Excellence**

  Developing the habits and mindset needed to maximise your university experience.

- ✔ **Career & Employability**

  Preparing for internships, applications, interviews, networking and the transition into professional life.

- ✔ **Faith & Values**

  Developing strong convictions and learning how to live authentically according to your values in an increasingly diverse world.

10. TEB Resources

Learning shouldn't stop when a programme ends.

The Elevation Board is building a growing collection of practical resources for students and young professionals, including:

- University guides and workbooks
- Personal development resources
- Career and employability tools
- Leadership resources
- Faith and values resources
- Articles and devotionals
- Podcasts and conversations
- Workshops and webinars
- Practical checklists and templates

The TEB University Survival Guide is only the beginning.

JOIN THE TEB ONLINE COMMUNITY

Don't just download the guide. Join the journey.

The TEB online community gives you somewhere to continue learning, connecting and growing.

Inside our community, you can receive:

- Invitations to upcoming TEB programmes and events
- Practical university and career resources
- Mentorship and development opportunities
- Workshops and webinars
- Encouragement and accountability
- Leadership and volunteering opportunities
- Access to new TEB resources

- Opportunities to connect with other students and young professionals

You may arrive because you need help navigating university. We hope you stay because you discover a community where you can **grow—and eventually help someone else grow too.**

Join The Elevation Board (TEB) community by;

Scan the QR code below or visit:

https://theelevationboard.org/elevation-campus-mission/

Follow **The Elevation Board (TEB)** on our social platforms to stay connected with upcoming programmes, resources and opportunities.

Instagram: https://www.facebook.com/share/1BSRn5dZFy/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/1BSRn5dZFy/

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@theelevationboardtv

Podcast: https://open.spotify.com/show/0346BrKCucDYYRIrZizBOV

Email: wholesomeelevationboard@gmail.com

11. From Surviving to Thriving

Your university years are important—but they are not the destination.

They are part of your preparation.

So, attend the lectures.

Ask the questions.

Build meaningful friendships.

Find mentors.

Manage your money.

Protect your wellbeing.

Develop your gifts.

Explore opportunities.

Hold on to your values.

Make mistakes, learn from them and keep moving forward.

And while you are working towards your degree, remember to work on **the person receiving the degree.**

Because ultimately, university is not only about **what you graduate with.** It is also about **who you become.**

12. Your next 90 days start now.

And you don't have to walk them alone.

The Elevation Board is ready to walk the journey with you.

Learn. Grow. Connect. Lead. Impact.

Welcome to The Elevation Board.