

Parents & Supporters Guide

Introduction

Transitioning to university can be an overwhelming and exciting experience, not only for students but for you as well - the parent, family member and/or supporter. We know the “how-to’s” about best supporting your student is on your mind, so we put together important resources and information for you to assist your student while they journey through this new chapter in their lives. Whether your student is coming straight from high school, transferring, or coming back after many years, this handbook will make it easier for you to navigate the many services, programs and opportunities to support your student’s success and overall well-being.

Welcome

Welcome to the U of T community! As a supporter we acknowledge the significant role you play in supporting your student and helping them achieve their academic and personal best. It’s important that you have access to information about the different resources available. We understand that it can be difficult to know what the best way is to assist your student, and so we would like to provide you with a few recommendations of ways you can support:

1. Set expectations together: Ask your student what would be helpful and how they wish to be supported.
2. Check-in: Let the student lead the way in how often, but check-ins can be especially helpful during half-way and end of terms when most mid-terms and exams occur.
3. Make recommendations of programs and services: If your student is facing a challenge – suggest to them what resources to look into and how they may get in touch with them.
4. Be encouraging: Remain positive and reassure your student that they can overcome any challenge with the right support and resources.

Thank you for being a part of the U of T community alongside your student. We hope that this handbook can work to support you as you support them start strong and finish stronger.

First things First

T card+ Services and UtorID

A TCard is your student’s campus identification and gives your student access to the library, gym and other services. Your student can even carry a cash balance to spend on food, printing and more. To learn more about how you can upload your students TCard as a guest, please visit:

<https://tcardplus.utoronto.ca/>

Before your student visits the TCard office, they should check that they have the right documents needed and that their information matches their legal status. For international students, a valid

study permit is needed, and Canadian students need to bring proof of citizenship. Once your student's TCard is obtained and activates, they will have access to the U of T Wi-Fi, UTmail+ email account.

For more information on TCard services, please visit: tcard.utoronto.ca

For more information on UtorID, please visit: utorid.utoronto.ca

Paying for Fees

Your student's invoices for fees, residence and meal plans are available online through ACORN, the student online information service. You will not have direct access to their account but can still make payments on their behalf. Payments must be made through a financial institution, via a bank machine, teller, online or by telephone. No payments are accepted on campus and credit-card payments are not accepted. To find out more about paying fees such as how to make payments from outside Canada, or about OSAP and other financial aid, please visit:

<https://future.utoronto.ca/finances/fees/>

Student Choice Initiative & Non-mandatory fees

The Student Choice Initiative is a new fee model which allows students to choose what they want to pay for and how that money will be allocated. Students may choose to opt-out of fees online, with a "opt back in" option that may be checked off at a later date. Many student organizations and programs offered at the U of T rely on incidental fees in order to operate. Some of these programs include student food banks, student unions, disability services, and student jobs. When you and/or your student pays their fees, it is important to consider how some of these programs and services are affected. For more information about the Student Choice Initiative please visit:

<https://www.chooseuoft.ca/>

Health & Dental Coverage

As a student at the U of T, your student is automatically covered by extended health insurance. This is provided through your student's student union, known as the Scarborough Campus Students' Union (SCSU). Extended health and dental coverage fill any gaps in provincial health care and other basic health-care programs. If your student already has health coverage, they can opt-out of Health and Dental coverage, as long as proof of coverage by an equivalent health plan can be provided. For more information and Health & Dental and opt-outs, please visit: <http://www.scsu.ca/health/>

Registering for AccessAbility Services

If your student has a documented disability (ongoing or temporary), we advise them to register with AccessAbility Services as soon as possible. If your student has a learning disability, mental illness, physical challenge or other accessibility issue, they may be eligible for specific accommodations such as:

- Deadline flexibility
- Note-taking services & peer mentoring
- Test and exam accommodations

For more information please visit: accessibility.utoronto.ca or <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/>

The UTSC Student Experience App

The UTSC Student Experience App is a convenient way to access student services on the go and connect with campus events. Encourage your student to download the app. This student app is free to download from the App Store and Google Play: uoft.me/utscapp

Orientation and Welcome Events

Orientation

Orientation at U of T is decentralized, which means that each college and faculty is responsible for its own orientation and transition programs. While each area may have different activities, all of these programs are to help new students make a smooth transition to their first year at U of T. During Orientation your student will learn about the awesome places and people on campus, and about the University's many programs and services. By participating in Orientation programming, your student will start to find their community on campus.

Each department, faculty and college has different dates but the majority of programming happens the first week of September before classes start. If your student is already affiliated with a college, they should have received some information from their college or faculty about registering for Orientation. If your student wants to attend their Orientation week events, we would advise that you and your student browse the various college webpages and social media pages for more information about orientation week schedules and how to register.

List of Orientation Week and Welcome events across campus:

We have a large number of orientation and welcome events across campus that are geared toward the diverse needs of our student population at U of T. Here is a list of some of the events we offer in order to best support your student in their transition:

- Welcome Day
- International Students Orientation
- Queer Orientation
- Scarborough Campus Students' Union Orientation

To find out more information about these events such as dates, location, schedules etc. please visit our orientation website at: uoft.me/utscorientation

Programs to get your student started

Other than Orientation week, University of Toronto offers several additional programs to help your student's transition to post-secondary life. These programs can be done in addition to or in replacement of orientation events provided by the various colleges, faculty and other student groups. In order to ensure that your student can make the best of their experience here, we suggest they register for one or both of the following programs:

First Year Experience Program

All incoming first-year UTSC students are automatically enrolled in the First Year Experience Program!

That means that you get access to a dedicated First Year Peer for the full year! Plus you're invited to come hang out with your First Year Peer at First Year events, workshops and social opportunities!

For more information about the First Year Experience program please visit:

<https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/studentlife/first-year-experience-program>

First Year Learning Communities

First Year Learning Communities (FLC) help first-year students to make connections within their program of study. The First Year Learning Communities Program is a registered program that groups approximately first-year students by their program of study in order to help students find a sense of community within their academic programs or shared identities. Pronounced as “flicks”, FLCs meet bi-weekly to participate in workshops and activities focused on academic skills development, career exploration, and socialization. These events include opportunities like Dinner With Your Professor, where students can get to know their professors and learn more about their academic journeys. For more information on first-year learning communities visit:

<https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/studentlife/first-year-learning-communities>

CLNx & the Co-curricular Record

In order to ensure that students are recognized for their involvement by employers and graduate schools, students are encouraged to contribute to a co-curricular record. The Co-curricular record (CCR) is an official U of T document that recognizes your student’s involvement as a significant part of their university experience. One great way for your student to find opportunities to get involved during their time here at the U of T is through the CCR database. Alternatively, students may also find opportunities as both a student and alumni, through the CLNx website.

For more information on CLNx please visit: <https://clnx.utoronto.ca/students/overview.htm>

For more information on the co-curricular record please visit:

<https://clnx.utoronto.ca/ccr/overview.htm>

Academic & Wellness Support

Academic Advising & Career Centre

The Academic Advising & Career Centre offers a variety of workshops and appointments around academics, such as degree counselling, as well as employment services such as resume reviews and mock interviews. We also offer online tools and one on one appointments. Working closely with our partner, *AccessAbility Services*, we are committed to student success. For more information, please visit: utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc

Health & Wellness Centre

The Health & Wellness Centre is here to support your health and well-being. We have a dedicated team of health care professionals who provide confidential medical care, nursing support and counselling. We also provide you with health promotion and health education services. Connected with Athletics & Recreation, we deliver collaborative programming designed to keep you healthy! For more information about the services provided by the Health & Wellness Centre, please visit: utsc.utoronto.ca/hwc

Centre for Teaching & Learning

The Centre for Teaching & Learning supports students to fulfill the intellectual demands of their courses in every discipline with specialized workshops and study groups. Resources available include: Writing Centre, Mathematics and Statistics Learning Centre, English Language Development Centre and Facilitated Study Groups. For more information about the Centre for Teaching & Learning, please visit: <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ctl/welcome-centre-teaching-and-learning>

Supporting International Students

International Student Centre

The International Student Centre is a hub for all international and domestic students. Whether you're seeking immigration and transition advising or looking for a global educational experience through studying abroad or intercultural programming, our team will be able to assist you! For more info about the International Student Centre, please visit: utsc.utoronto.ca/utscinternational

My SSP

My SSP provides international students with immediate and/or ongoing confidential, 24 hour support for any school, health, or general life concern at no cost to your student. Your student can call or chat with a counsellor directly from their phone whenever, wherever they are. International students still have access to existing campus and community mental health services; My SSP is an additional support service for international students. Encourage your Student to download the My SSP app: [Apple App Store](#) | [Google Play](#)

Supporting Mature Students & Students with Family Responsibilities

Family Care Office

Here at the University of Toronto, we believe that family care responsibilities should never take away from any student's university experiences. The University is dedicated to supporting students with family commitments, aiding them in successfully completing their studies while caring for

family members and themselves. The Family Care Office provides confidential guidance, resources, referrals, educational programming and advocacy for the U of T community and their families. They offer a peer mentorship program as well as a variety of workshops to assist your student in all of their transitions while at U of T such as Caring for a newborn, kids, a partner, siblings, and/or the elderly. For more information please visit: <https://familycare.utoronto.ca/>

Family Housing

University of Toronto offers affordable housing specifically for students with families. Students with a partner, spouse, or children studying full-time are welcome to apply to family residence located at Yonge and Bloor – a five minute walk to campus. For more information on amenities, eligibility requirements and how to apply please email family.housing@utoronto.ca, call 416-978-8049 or visit: <http://studentfamilyhousing.utoronto.ca/>

Robarts Library Childcare

U of T has designed a new family study space at the Robarts Library (the first in Canada!) to help student-parents ease the stress of finding childcare and a place to study. The new space welcomes parents and their children under 12 and includes work stations, child-sized furniture, chalk boards, TV screen and a handful of toys to keep your students children busy.

To find out more information about the space and how to register, please visit:

<https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/family-study-space-robarts>

Early Learning Centres

The Early Learning Centres provide an inclusive learning and care environment that promotes the health, safety, nutrition and over all well-being of each child. There are three different locations that offer three different types of programs: Infant, toddler, and preschool.

For more information about programs and who to contact for location-specific questions, visit:

<https://elc.utoronto.ca/contact-us/>

Supporting a Diverse Student Population

First Nations House

First Nations House provides culturally relevant services to Indigenous students in support of academic success, personal growth and leadership development. We also offer learning opportunities for all students to engage with Indigenous communities within the University of Toronto and beyond.

We know that navigating financial aid as an indigenous student can be tricky and First Nations House is there to help students learn about and access a wide variety of scholarships and grants. If your student wants financial aid advising or wants to read about the many financial aid opportunities available to indigenous students, they should contact the coordinator of Academic support.

More information about First Nations House, Academic support and indigenous community building, please visit: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/fnh>

Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office

The Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office (ARCD) within the Division of Human Resources & Equity, provides services to support University members in their efforts to foster environments that are intentionally racially diverse and inclusive through the advancement of equitable practices, education and training and the provision of complaints resolution supports on matters of race, faith and intersecting identities as guided by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Your student can attend exciting educational programming, and can also connect to address complaints of harassment and discrimination. For more information, please visit: <https://antiracism.utoronto.ca/>

Sexual and Gender Diversity Office

The Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO) develops partnerships to build supportive learning and working communities at the University of Toronto by working towards equity and challenging discrimination. The Office provides innovative education, programming, resources and advocacy on sexual and gender diversity for students, staff and faculty across the University's three campuses. The University of Toronto offers a wide range of opportunities for students to engage with sexual & gender diversity within and outside the classroom. The SGDO, along with a wide range of student organizations and University departments host a range of programs and services to support LGBTQ students, students who are questioning their sexual & gender orientation, allies and students who would like to learn more about LGBTQ communities. For more information, please visit: <https://sgdo.utoronto.ca/>

Multi-faith

Beliefs are a big part of who we are and how we learn, and while U of T is a secular institution, we respect everyone's right to worship. The University of Toronto Scarborough is home to an environment of multiple faiths, worldviews, ethnicities and cultures.

In addition to multi-faith space on campus, the Multi-faith Engagement Program at the University of Toronto Scarborough includes a variety of services and programs that foster practice, observance, interfaith community, support and learning. For more information, please visit:

<https://utsc.utoronto.ca/studentlife/multi-faith-engagement>

Student Clubs, Organization & Unions

With over 200 clubs on campus, clubs and organizations are a great way for you students to find community at school and get involved within the U of T community. With a diverse range of interests, students can obtain membership to a wide range of social events, leadership programs and training programs geared toward club members and club leaders across the campus. Student governments, student unions or student councils are also a great resource for social programming, developing leadership skills and giving back to the community. For more information about clubs,

organizations, student governments, unions and councils advise your student to visit <https://utsc.utoronto.ca/studentlife/campus-life>

Resources for Student's Questions

ASKme Program

The ASKme program provides answers to students' frequently asked questions during orientation and the first few weeks of the semester. The ASKme program creates a friendly and welcoming community for new students arriving at the U of T Scarborough campus. Have your student looking out for ASKme pop-up booths around campus, where upper-year students and recent alumni are on hand ready to answer questions that you are unable to! For more information about the ASKme Program and a list of frequently asked questions, please visit:

<https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/studentaffairs/askme>

Registrarial Services

We know that University of Toronto and its many services can make it difficult for your student to know where and whom to turn to when they are looking for answers. When in doubt, we recommend you direct them to their divisional registrar. Your student's registrar is one of the best resources your student can have for navigating university services and resources.

Although there are some differences among divisions, in general, your student should call or visit their registrar for:

- Academic Advising - help in formulating and/or adjusting their short- or long-term educational goals, including course selection and interpreting degree requirements and understanding university regulations
- Personal Counselling - assistance with any matter that is getting in the way of your student's success as a student

- Financial Counselling - help with financial planning, budgeting and overcoming financial emergencies

Your student's registrar can also refer them to appropriate resources on campus if they are struggling with personal or academic issues that are affecting their school work.

For a list of registrar's and student life offices, please visit: <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/>

Key information and Resources for Families and Supporters

Access to Information

While your interest in your student's progress is certainly encouraged, you may find it disconcerting to learn that you do not have automatic access to student records. It is university policy and by law that the university cannot release details about a student to anyone, even parents, without the student's written consent. If there are concerns regarding performance, rules and deadlines, for example, it is up to the student to address them directly. In most cases, that is done through the Office of the Registrar, which employs a staff of experienced and concerned academic and financial advisors to assist your student to succeed.

U of T Resources

There are online resources and guides available to you in order to help you support your student in the best way possible. Take a browse through the link below for more tips on how to best support your student's transition: <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/studentaffairs/parents-family>

Office of Student Experience & Wellbeing Website and Social Media Pages

Website: uoft.me/studentexperience

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/utscstudentexperience/?hl=en>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWHPJSpCy1Fw2OSJK9E1U9A>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UTSCstudentexperience/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/utscstudentexp?lang=en>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How do I pay my student's bill?

Your student's invoices for fees, residence and meal plans are available online through [ACORN, the student online information service](#). You will not have direct access to their account but can still make payments on their behalf. Payments must be made through a financial institution, via a bank machine, teller, online or by telephone. To pay your student's fees on their behalf, you and your student must follow the steps below to make sure their fees are paid on time:

1. Have your student send you their invoice from ACORN to be printed off

2. Locate your Financial institution

a. Domestic Students

- Pay your student's fees through a bank in person, online or through telephone banking. Remember, fees payments are not accepted on campus. Your student can also make a payment using your credit card through ACORN

b. International Students

- Use Western Union's Global Pay or send a bank draft or money order in Canadian funds to the University of Toronto. Or have your student make a payment using your credit card through ACORN

3. Set up U of T as one of your payee accounts by providing your financial institution with your student's U of T student account number and the name "University of Toronto" if you pay by phone or online

4. Your student's U of T student account number is displayed on the invoice format of their account on ACORN. The account number consists up to the first five characters of their surname (in capital letters) and 10 numbers which is your student's student number.

5. Save your confirmation number in case there is a delay in processing your payment. If you paid after the deadline, make sure you get proof of payment showing that you paid, and have your student show it to their college registrar's office as soon as possible.

How can I access my student's grades and health records?

While your interest in your student's progress is certainly encouraged, you do not have automatic access to student records. Please see the "access to information" section for more details.

Can I add money to my student's T card?

TCard+ Guest Card holders can use [eAccounts](#) to make a deposit to their Guest Card with any major Credit Card and Visa Debit! In order to successfully make a deposit, you will need to complete the form on the home page as follows:

1. First Name Field: Enter "Guest"

2. Last Name Field: Enter the last 4 or 5 digits (after the series of 0s) of your Guest Card number as indicated on the back of your Guest Card

3. Card Number Field: Enter the entire 16 digit card number as indicated on the back of your Guest Card (begins with 4176).

Once you input the information above on [eAccounts](#), follow the instructions to complete the deposit. Once the deposit is complete, you will have access to the funds immediately.

To upload funds to your student's Tcard as a guest, please visit: <https://tcardplus.utoronto.ca/>