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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate guide for Mature Learners



Mature learners guide

You may be considering Higher Education (HE) for the first time or be returning to complete your HE studies.

Either way, York St John University is here to help you with the transition. At York St John we welcome any individual who has a passion to learn no matter their age. Just under one fifth (16.6%) of our undergraduate student population are over 21 when they start. This figure includes UK and international students as well as students studying abroad with us.

We hope you find this guide useful and if you have any further queries, please get in touch with our Widening Participation team on:

E: wp@yorksja.ac.uk



Who is classed as a mature learner

UCAS defines a mature learner as any student who is over the age of 21 at the start of their studies.

The benefits of Higher Education

By returning to learning you will:

- Expand and specialise your knowledge within a chosen subject.
- Develop your transferable skills.
- Gain an internationally recognised qualification.
- Increase your earning potential.
- Make a change to your career path.
- Meet new people from different cultures, backgrounds and industries.

Why choose York St John

York St John University is the oldest Higher Education institution in York and has been at the forefront of teaching and education for over 175 years. Our campus is located in the centre of the historic city, facing the world famous York Minster and the city walls. Our award winning campus, based in an idyllic location, sees continuous investment to create facilities for our students that support the community spirit that we pride ourselves on.

We have a growing population of around 8000 students, including more than 500 international students. York St John University is committed to developing the best opportunities for our students. Working directly with employers, we proactively build partnerships with industry to ensure that our courses meet 21st Century employers' needs and create the global graduates of the future. We ensure that our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge that they need to succeed in their chosen career.



Mature entry offer scheme

Are you interested in returning to study?

Have you been out of education for at least 3 years but hold a GCSE English Language at Grade C or equivalent?

York St John has developed a unique entry scheme for mature students that recognises non-traditional qualifications and both life and occupational experience.

If you meet the above requirements, all you need to do is complete a short application form and write a 250 to 500 word personal statement to accompany this. Within this personal statement, we would like to hear about why you are passionate about your subject, why you want to study with us along with any relevant skills or experience that you have.

You can apply for all of our courses through this scheme with the following exceptions:

- Biomedical Science
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Primary Teaching

All of these courses have specific requirements or are accredited courses that contain specific statutory entry requirements.

For further information and the application form please go to:

www.yorks.ac.uk/mature-entry-offer-scheme



Support networks

Induction Week for Mature Learners

Once your place has been confirmed with us, you will be able to book onto activities and support sessions specifically for mature learners in our induction week. During this week, you will have the chance to learn more about relevant university services, meet and interact with other new mature learners at the university and take part in various study skills workshops.

Dedicated point of contact

We have a dedicated contact for mature learners during your time at York St John. They are able to chat through your situation and signpost towards any extra support you may require.

This may include information on academic support and social activities of interest, extra funding opportunities and other practical information for commuters, parents or carers.

Digital training

The Digital Training Team offers IT support to all students. Once you have access to your YSJ IT account you will be able to book 1-to-1 support sessions with the Digital Support Team, who can assist with the use of most programmes used on your course (this excludes specialist, course-specific programmes, which course academics will support with). You will also have access to a range of IT courses, and an induction module which covers general use of programmes commonly used throughout the university. As a student, you will not have to pay for Microsoft Office Software. This can be accessed for free after enrollment.

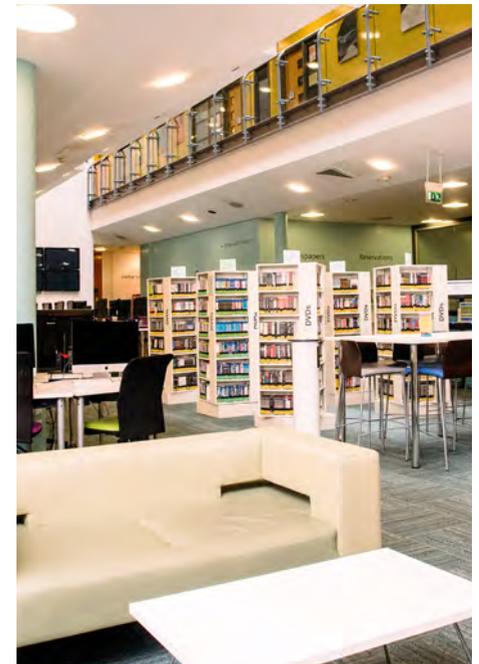
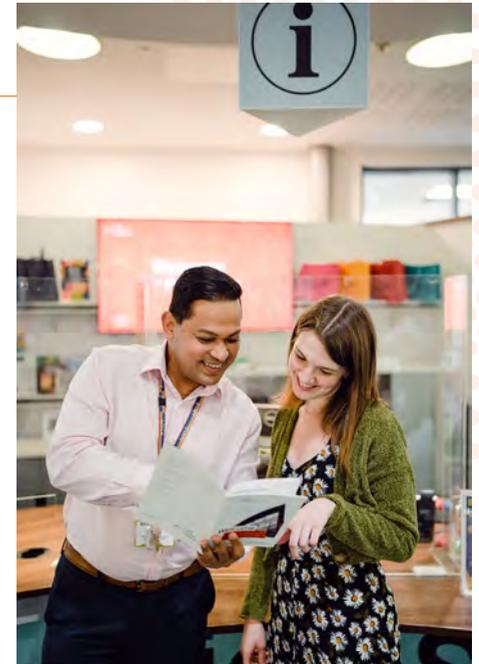
Academic Tutor

When you embark on an undergraduate course at the university, 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. 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 Team

The Study Development team offers workshops and individual appointments to help students to develop and adapt their working methods, academic writing style or act on assignment feedback. They can also help you deal with a particular assignment (written or otherwise). Small group tutorials are also offered if preferred as it gives you the opportunity to learn from your peers. Self help resources related to essay writing, exam success, critical thinking, reflective writing and avoiding plagiarism are also available from the Study Development team.

Contact the Student Development team on:
E: studydevelopment@yorks.ac.uk



Students' Union support

The Liberation Officers are elected annually from the current student population. They work on behalf of students on various issues across areas of all student life. Their purpose is to ensure that specific groups of student voices are heard, and play a role in helping to build a supportive community at York St John University. In particular, the Mature/ Postgraduate officer role is to develop the mature learner community on campus and to be a professional but approachable contact for others to reach out to.



Finance

Have you studied at higher education level before?

If you have studied at higher education level before then this may affect your eligibility for student finance. We recommend you contact our Student Funding Advice Team when considering returning to study

E: fundingadvice@yorks.j.ac.uk

Student Finance

Providing that this is your first degree, eligible full time students can take out a Tuition Fee Loan of up to £9,250 to cover the tuition fees. (If studying part time you need to be doing a course intensity of 25% or above to qualify). There is also a Maintenance Loan available for students, approximately 44% of this is means-tested on your household income. If you are over the age of 60, the amount of Maintenance Loan that you qualify for will be limited. Applications can be made online: www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance

Additional funding

Parents Learning Allowance

You may be eligible for the Parents Learning Allowance (non-repayable) if you are studying full time and have dependent children. Parents Learning Allowance is means-tested so is dependent on your household income. For example, in the 2023 to 2024 academic year students are eligible for between £50 and £1915 a year.

Childcare Grant

There is a Childcare Grant available for full time students, however, eligibility for this depends on your household income and the number of children who are dependent on you.

NHS Funding

If you are studying on an Allied Health Professional degree (for example Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy) from September 2020, in addition to the Student Finance funding, eligible students will receive £5,000 (non-repayable). Some students will receive an additional payment of up to £3,000 in regions or specialisms struggling to recruit and to help cover childcare costs.



Accommodation

Our accommodation is all close to campus, so you will always be near to its facilities wherever you choose to live. We have a range of accommodation to suit all styles and budgets, including modern purpose built sites with ensuite bathrooms and converted early twentieth century buildings with lots of character.

As a mature learner, there are a couple of options that might be more appealing to you:

49 Clarence Street



49 Clarence Street is our exclusive property for both postgraduate and mature students, equipped with ensuite rooms, large kitchens, social spaces and an outdoor area. This property is directly opposite the Fountains Learning Centre, so you could not be closer to the university's excellent library facilities.

University Managed Housing

University Managed Houses are perfect if you are looking for an alternative to halls of residence but are still keen to experience life with other students. These are private properties managed by the university on behalf of the landlord who owns them, so you still benefit from the support of the Accommodation team. These properties range from 4 to 10 bedrooms each with their own distinctive features.



You can apply for accommodation via the online Accommodation Hub; we guarantee university managed or partner provider accommodation for all first year undergraduate students who meet our application deadlines. On the Accommodation Hub you can choose 3 preferences and specify if you have any additional requirements such as wanting to be housed with other mature learners.

Alternatively, York also has a brilliant portfolio of private accommodation available through landlords and letting agencies. If you would like to consider private accommodation, please take a look at our house hunting pages online. We have various accommodation sites and options available. Find out more using the details below.

yorks.ac.uk/accommodation

Commuting students

Transport

You can apply for a university car parking permit (prices may vary, see our website for more information). The university also has over 300 bike racks located across the campus offering both open and closed facilities. If you choose to travel by train, it takes around 15 minutes to walk to York St John from York Station. 16-25 railcards can also be purchased by mature students with proof of enrollment.

Lockers

There are a number of lockers available for day use only in the Fountains Centre and in the Foss Building if you need to store anything securely.

Eating and drinking on campus

The Student Kitchen in the Fountains Learning Centre has a hot water tap and two microwaves, perfect for making a cup of tea and heating up your lunch! An additional hot water tap is located on the ground floor of the Fountains Centre.



Commuting student accommodation

Many students stay at home during their studies for a variety of reasons. We are committed to ensuring that these students are included the same way as those who moved to York. We have various support services available for commuting students and one of these being our commuting student accommodation.

The Grange - Commuting students accommodation



If you would prefer to commute for your studies, but would still like the convenience of staying in accommodation for a particular lecture or social event then our commuting student accommodation is a great option. These rooms can be booked for a limited number of nights on an ad hoc basis (subject to availability). Surrounding the buildings, you'll find lots of communal green spaces where you can hang out with new friends or catch up on some reading.

To book or for more information, email our accommodation team.

E: accommodation@yorks.ac.uk

“ ‘An excellent CV which demonstrated all the keys required in the job spec, but nothing to back it up academically.’ This was a typical response from my current job search, which had included council administration jobs, event assistant positions and junior journalist jobs. I had been unsuccessful for them all and was desperate to move away from restaurant work into a new direction. A long time ago I had made the decision that I didn’t want to go to university. It felt too financially unstable, more debt and entering into the unknown. But it was time to make a choice; continue the never-ending cycle of jumping from one mediocre job to another or make the leap and engage with new opportunities. I was never very academic, A level results which I still have nightmares about, and a persistent lack of lack of self-belief always led me to believe, ‘I am not university material.’ But it is amazing what years of work have taught me without realising. The ability to engage with a wide range of people, the importance of deadlines, behaving professionally. Turns out I was better at this than I expected!

University life has offered more opportunities than I could have ever achieved alone, a support network including lecturers, career support and additional funding as a mature student. It turns out, age really is no barrier.

I have done things I would not have considered possible 18 months ago.

I am ready to tackle the future with new skills and new sense of self belief ready for a rewarding job. I might be starting this journey 20 years after my peers but for anyone considered a degree later in life, trust me, once you have started you will find yourself asking, ‘Why didn’t I do this sooner?’

My husband will be joining the York St John family in 2020. Apparently, I can’t have all the fun!

Anna - Events Management



“ I think what stands out are the lecturers themselves and their passion for social justice and the debates and discussions they spark.

I’m getting support every which way I turn all of the tutors and admin staff in the School, my academic tutor, Study Support team, Wellbeing, careers advice from Launchpad. The YSJ experience is turning me into a very competent professional and happier person.

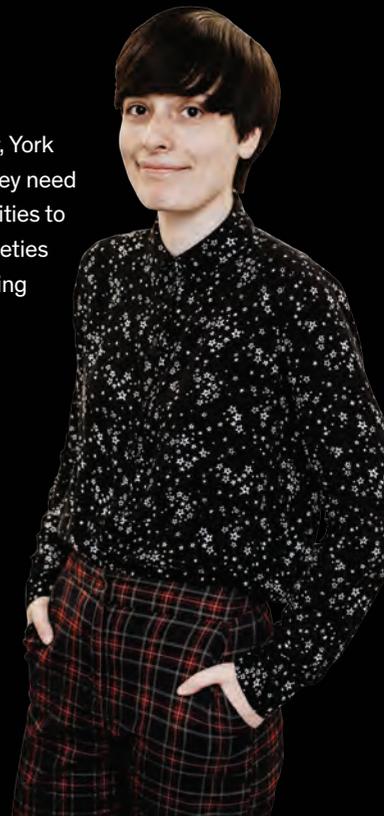
The Mature Students group and Emma Maslin were a brilliant support and resource during my first year. Coming to university for the first time in my 40s was a daunting thing, but these guys helped me feel at home.

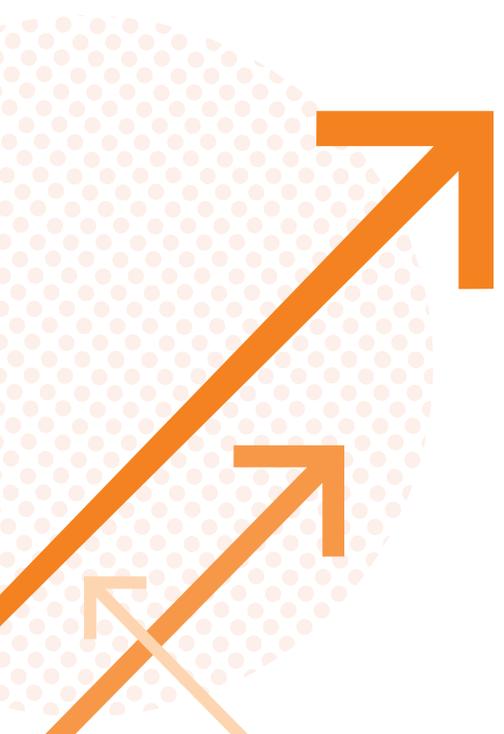
Clare - Children, Young People and Families

“ Being 25, I did have concerns about going back to education after being out of it for 7 years. However, York St John has great support for mature students if they need help with their studies. They also provide opportunities to meet other mature students and have an extensive range of societies and clubs in which to socialise and meet new people. Since coming to university, my network has exploded with new people from all walks of life.

York St John has provided many opportunities to meet with and interact with the Japanese exchange students here at the university. Through these events, I’ve made some very good friends which provides me with real-world, out of lesson experience in speaking Japanese. The language exchange works both ways, I help them with English and they help me with Japanese. Making friends with the Japanese students also means I’ll be able to see a friendly face when I go to Japan for my second year of study.

Lindsay - Japanese with TESOL





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Every effort has been made to ensure this information is correct at the time of going to print. However due to circumstances outside our control some things may change.
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