

# BRIGHT FUTURES

Our guide to  
student finance, getting out and about and  
help for families

Issue 6

February 2022

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# University clubs and societies

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**When attending university, studying isn't the only perk! University is a great time to get involved in a new club or society or to continue a long held hobby.**

At Exeter University, thousands of students sign up to over 180 different Guild-affiliated societies. These societies cover a wide range of activities enabling students to get fully involved with university life. Societies range from the conventional (such as English Soc, Ski Club, Photosoc and Jazz Orchestra), to the more esoteric (such as the Chocolate Society and Hide and Seek Society).

You can get involved with the running of any of these clubs and if there's a society you want that they don't have, they'll help you set it up.

## Why join a society?

### Skills

Learning new skills has a whole host of benefits; improves concentration, makes you happier, keeps your brain sharp and gives you something cool to talk about. Who knows, these new skills may end up being a huge part of your life one day.

### Connections

Networking is a great way to get kick started on your future career; the connections you make with people now may end up being crucial to your development further down the line. So expanding your connection opportunities beyond your lecture room is bound to have a positive effect on your chances later on.

### CV boost

Employers will notice you more if you have unusual hobbies or interests that they can ask you about at interview, especially if those interests relate to your degree in some way, or demonstrate your abilities to organise or work as part of a team.

## **Stress reduction**

We all know the saying - "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy", well it's true. Do you want to spend the next 3 years getting stressed about studying, exams and deadlines? Having a hobby helps you to take time out from your study schedule and think about something else. Sometimes coming away from your studies for a period of time is exactly what you need to feel fresh enough to hit the books again.

## **Friends**

It's safe to say that you will find interesting, like-minded people at societies, whom you might not have come across otherwise. Get involved in helping to organise the social events for the group and you will soon become a familiar face.

## **Confidence**

For a lot of people, confidence is something to be earned and worked upon. Joining a society will help you develop your confidence and give you great interpersonal skills for use in all areas of your life.

## **Passion**

A lot of people don't know what they are passionate about it - but without trying out new skills how will you ever know? It's ok not to love everything you have signed up for, but by signing up in the first place you are taking your first steps towards finding your passion.

## Clubs at South Dartmoor

You don't have to wait until attending university to enjoy a packed schedule of in school and after school clubs and activities.

Our extracurricular clubs are varied and exciting. Some examples are: Computer Coding Club which is on every Thursday week A, break 2 in RM04. Speak to Mr Richards if you are interested!

If you are a Year 10 student, you are invited to join the English department for Home Learning Club every Wednesday 3:10pm – 4:10pm.

All Years are welcome to join the Maths department for SPARX Club before school or during break 1 in MA1.

If you are a music lover, the music department have a full timetable of extra coaching and activities available on the student bulletin. Do try to get involved as new attendees are most welcome.

PE enthusiasts will no doubt be thrilled at the line-up of activities provided by our fabulous PE department. Clubs on offer range from PE theory support to basketball club (and everything in between!). Speak to Mr Roberts for more information or keep a keen eye on the student bulletin for days and times.

# Getting Out and About

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We know holidays can be expensive so take a look at this fun-filled list of activities that the whole family can enjoy.

## National Parks

We have two glorious National Parks nearby, Dartmoor and Exmoor. Both have their own unique characters – while Dartmoor is a wild, wide-open place filled with mystery, towering granite Tors and dramatic scenery, Exmoor (although it too has its open spaces), is filled with secret, hidden treasures such as Tarr Steps. And if you're into star-gazing, Exmoor is now designated as a Dark Sky Reserve (one of only two in the world) so on a clear night you're guaranteed to see the Milky Way in all its true splendour without any light pollution masking the view!

Over on Dartmoor you'll be able to grab the chance to get away from the hustle and bustle of modern life and stumble across Neolithic monuments, dramatic gorges and beautiful sights, such as the Dartmoor ponies. Both moors have their legends too – on Exmoor you can discover the world of Lorna Doone, while on Dartmoor be careful not to get caught in the 'Grimpen Mire' or chased by the dreaded Hound of the Baskervilles!

## I love to go a-wandering...

Ramble the length of Devon for free on the South West Coast Path, a fantastic route which will introduce you to some of the finest views and bring you all the way around to the Jurassic Coast, where you can hunt on the beach for fossils.

Throughout Devon a network of paths and bridleways will take you off the beaten track and into the heart of the countryside – and there are plenty of local pubs on the way to grab some well-earned refreshments too. For a free walk in the city, try one of Exeter's Red Coat Guided Tours, a must on any visit to Exeter.

## Geocaching

Try geocaching - otherwise known as a digital treasure hunt. Hunting for hidden 'caches' using a smart phone for navigation is becoming increasingly popular, and is a great way to get children out on a walk. It's also surprisingly easy to get started; [read this linked guide](#) to geocaching in Devon.

## Surfing

Surfers are spoilt for choice, with easier waves on the south coast and at the sandy expanse of Woolacombe beach on the North Devon coast, while more capable board-jockeys can head to Croyde for some challenging waves. If you're not a surfer, there are lots of rock pools to discover here too.

Back on the south coast you can grab a bucket and spade for a few pennies and go crabbing at Dittisham, and if the weather is at its best then you can head to any one of the numerous Blue Flag beaches around Devon for a splash in the waves. If you don't fancy the idea of open-sea swimming then pack your costume and head to Shoalstone Open Air Pool.

## Culture vultures

If you like a bit of culture, there are plenty of freebies on offer too. Wander around west Devon's castles at Lydford, or visit the West Devon UNESCO World Heritage. You can visit the fascinating herb gardens at Buckfast Abbey or follow the Agatha Christie Literary Trail through Torquay and Torbay for a glimpse into the Queen of Crime's life.

No matter what you want to do, there's plenty of choice in Devon, and it doesn't have to cost you a penny!

# New full-time students – Student Loans

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You can apply for a Tuition Fee Loan and Maintenance Loan if your course starts on or after 1 August 2016.

## Tuition Fee Loan

Your university or college sets your tuition fee, and the loan is paid directly to them. You have to pay it back.

If you're a full-time student, you can get up to £9,250.

If you're studying an accelerated degree course, you could get up to £11,100.

## Maintenance Loan for living costs

You have to give details of your household income and your course start date.

The loan is paid directly into your bank account at the start of each term. You have to pay the loan back.

You may not get the full amount, so you may have to find other ways to fund the rest of your living costs. This could include, for example, part-time work, local authority assistance, bursaries, scholarships, or family contributions.

You must report any changes to your living arrangements in your online account, so you get the correct amount of student finance. You might need evidence of any changes.

	2021 to 2022 academic year	2022 to 2023 academic year
<b>Living with your parents</b>	Up to £7,987	Up to £8,171
<b>Living away from your parents, outside London</b>	Up to £9,488	Up to £9,706
<b>Living away from your parents, in London</b>	Up to £12,382	Up to £12,667
<b>You spend a year of a UK course studying abroad</b>	Up to £10,866	Up to £11,116
<b>If you're 60 or over on the first day of the first academic year of your course</b>	Up to £4,014	Up to £4,106

## Extra help with travel costs

You might get a grant to cover some travel expenses if you normally live in England but study away from home. If you're a medical or dental student you might also qualify for help with the costs of attending clinical placements in the UK.