

Peer Support – Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to use the whole hour?

No, you don't have to use the whole hour, but you may. There is no average length of a session. Some contacts can be as short as 15-20 minutes, others much longer. How you use this time is totally up to you.

How is the support you offer different to other university support/ counselling/ advice?

Although we are trained in providing peer support, we are not professional counsellors or therapists. We believe that sometimes it may not be easy to open up to a professional. Therefore, we try to provide a safe and comfortable space in which you can talk about anything you would like with another student who may have gone through a similar experience to you.

Can I book multiple sessions?

Yes, you can book multiple sessions if you feel like you need to. How you use this service really depends on your needs.

Do you take notes or keep a record of contacts?

We keep a very brief record of contacts to understand the topics discussed during the sessions so that we can improve our service according to the needs of our contacts. However, these notes are totally anonymous and do not disclose any personal information that can be linked back to you.

Is it possible to meet outside of the peer link context?

Unfortunately, it is not possible to meet outside of the peer support sessions. This is for your own safety as well as ours as peer link workers. Thank you for your understanding. If you are struggling to connect with other students, we can help you explore ways to meet people. There are loads of fantastic ways for you to meet other students, including our diverse range of [clubs and societies](#), [volunteering opportunities](#), and [student networks](#).

Will this be running for the whole term/year?

We are planning to run the peer support service until the end of Term 3. The availability next academic year is to be confirmed.

How can I get involved with this project?

If you would like to contribute to this project, you can take part in our evaluation. You will be thanked for your time with a £5 voucher for the baseline survey, and follow-up survey (totalling £10), and a £10 voucher for taking part in an interview. We would really appreciate your participation in our evaluation. Thank you!

How can I get the most out of this service?

Our peer support sessions provide a safe space for you to talk about anything from academic to personal issues. You may be looking for someone to just talk about your life in general or to signpost you to specific services. If you need, you can book multiple sessions. As long as you are open about what's going on for you, you can get the most of this service.

Will I be signposted to services that are inside or outside of UCL?

You may be signposted to services that are both inside and outside of UCL. As well as the many services offered by the university, there may also be NHS or community organisations that can help you. We will explore what sort of supporting you are looking and make suggestions based on this.

Can I use the peer support service to improve my conversational English?

We don't provide support for conversational English. Our focus is on providing emotional support to students who may be struggling or dealing with a specific issue. But we are happy to talk to you about ways you might improve your English. The SU offers a Language and Writing Support Programme – we run a Coffee and Conversation session specifically to help you with this.

Are peer link workers trained?

Yes, we are trained in providing peer support. As part of preparing us for the role we attend 16 hours of training that covers building effective relationships, maintaining confidentiality, and supporting students who may be at risk to themselves or others. We are also trained in how to signpost you to the support available both inside and outside of UCL.

What if I can no longer make the session?

If for some reason you need to change or cancel your booking, please let us know by using the cancellation/change options at the bottom of your booking confirmation email. We would appreciate as much notice as you are able to give, so other students can benefit from the time slot.