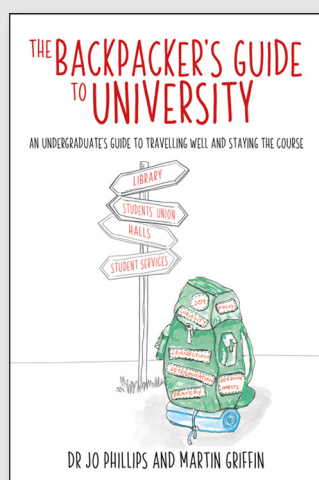


P R E S S R E L A S E

"Highly recommended reading for Year 13s and a thoughtful, confidence-boosting gift for friends and family members about to start university."

Ben White, Secondary School Leader, Education Consultant and co-author of *The Next Big Thing in Education*.



The Backpacker's Guide to University **An undergraduate's guide to travelling well and staying the course**

By Dr Jo Phillips and Martin Griffin

ISBN: 9781785837449

Price: £12.99

Published by: Crown House Publishing

Date of publication: August 2025

Scan to learn more:



University is an adventure waiting to happen and this book will be your guide, offering encouraging and friendly advice to help you navigate the journey like a seasoned backpacker.

How can we best prepare young people for university?

The university experience is continually evolving. With tuition fees surpassing £9,000 a year and with no guarantee of a graduate job at the end, many students are finding that university doesn't always deliver on its promise. Even before term begins, the process can feel overwhelming, from navigating UCAS forms to securing accommodation and packing up to live independently, often for the first time. Once they arrive, many students struggle to adjust emotionally, socially, academically and financially.

Alarmingly, 57% of UK students now report experiencing a mental health issue, a figure which is seven times higher than a decade ago.¹ As dropout rates continue to rise, with 6.3% of students leaving university early, it's clear that something needs to change.² Students need more guidance on what to expect during this new chapter in their lives. And when dropping out early can mean losing thousands of pounds, a bit of practical, reassuring advice - such as is provided by this book - might make all the difference.

Dr Jo Phillips and Martin Griffin have a collective 45 years' experience teaching sixth formers and undergraduates, and have supported students through applications, the writing of personal statements, open days, last-minute panics, and the leap into university life. They understand how daunting that leap can be, and know exactly what helps students stay afloat once they've made it.

Between them, they've also been students a total of 8 times, experiencing their fair share of mistakes, so they still vividly remember what it's like to try and learn something new, deal with unfamiliar settings, figure out what the teacher expects and submit work on time.

Their new book, *The Backpacker's Guide to University*, distils that experience into a warm, practical guide to making the most of university. It includes a helpful demystification of the language of university, as well as clear advice on adjusting to university study, campus life and independent learning. Together, Jo and Martin share clear and easy tasks, structured so that students can work through them sequentially from pre-arrival to the end of the first year and beyond.

¹ UWill, '2025 Mental Health Snapshot: Understanding Well-Being Among UK University Students'. Available at: <https://uwill.com/uk-2025-mental-health-snapshot/>.

² Louise Kursmark, 'Degree Dropouts', Debut Careers. Available at: <https://debut.careers/degree-dropouts/#:~:text=On%20average%2C%206%20in%20every%20100%20286.3%25%29%20students,education%20institutions%20to%20find%20out%20university%20dropout%20statistics.>

PRESS RELEASE

Above all, this book encourages students to embrace the 'backpacker approach', a transformative mindset that will empower them to immerse themselves in the spirit of adventure and seize every opportunity that university life has to offer.

Essential reading for all educators.

"This book takes university and makes it something to be excited for rather than terrified of. It's perfect for university students and anybody who needs a bit of guidance and encouragement."

Emily Barber, sixth form student, writer

About the author



Dr Jo Phillips taught in four different sixth form colleges, then moved into higher education, and has been teaching in universities for the last 15 years. This puts her in a rare position - she's taught not only A Level students but hundreds of undergraduates too. She currently teaches Landscape Architecture at the University of Sheffield.

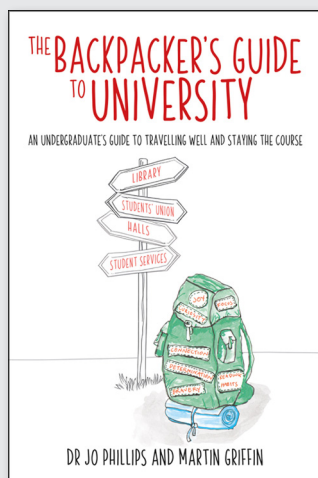


Martin Griffin has spent his career teaching in three different sixth form colleges and has been a head of sixth form and deputy headteacher, guiding and supporting people with their university applications. He is currently an award-winning writer of both fiction and non-fiction, and he trains teachers to help students perform at their best.

Articles and interviews available

Jo and Martin are available for interview, expert comment or by-lined articles on a range of topics, such as:

- Successful study at university
- Motivation
- Independent learning
- Focus
- Distraction and social media
- Habit formation
- Academic success
- Joy in learning



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