

Blog – January 2022

## Transfer smoothly into life at York U!

Firstly, a Happy New Year to everyone! Welcome back to all our returning mature, part-time and transfer students! And of course, a special warm welcome to our newly admitted Winter 2022 transfer and international students – that's more than 500 of you! This blog is especially for you, and I hope you find some helpful and insightful information to help you transition smoothly into your life at York! Whether you are coming to us from abroad, or from down the road, you are about to embark on an exciting academic and personal journey.

You are likely to be overwhelmed with all the information you are getting and the anticipation of the unknown. Whether you are transferring from a college or another university, you will undoubtedly have many questions. Here at ACMAPS, we are helping to support your transfer journey through information events, mentoring and giving you a safe space to come with any questions or issues you may have. Since I am not a transfer student, I asked my two fellow students (who are both mature student peer mentors at ACMAPS) about their experiences and top tips for success!

Beenish is in her final year of the Children Childhood and Youth studies (CCY) program. She is an international transfer mature student from Saudi Arabia who went back to study after 18 years. Alexandra is a transfer student from University of Toronto studying Sociology.

### ***What has been the most challenging aspect of being a transfer student into York University?***

***Beenish:*** Prior to coming on campus, I was really confused about how I will enroll in the courses of my choice, how I will navigate my way on campus, will I be the only mature student in class, will other students accept my presence, etc. However, I had a smooth transition and there were plenty of resources and guidance available to resolve all issues. It really didn't take me too long to adjust.

**Alexandra:** Most challenging aspect for me as a mature student and as a transfer student coming to York University was just getting into the swing of how things worked at York. I appreciated that all schools are going to be different with certain classes being harder and some easier. Its important to remember that you are transitioning into a new environment, the same way as if you were a person coming from high school to university. Also throw in a global pandemic and that makes it even harder and more challenging. I did not expect to be doing my courses online, but I adjusted the way you would with any changes. My main worry was about the social aspect (or lack of it) especially with everything being virtual but I navigated my way around that thanks to [YUMSO](#) (York University Mature Student Association) and ACMAPS!

***Did you utilize any resources on campus/virtually to help you navigate starting your university life?***

**Beenish:** To be honest, until I physically arrived on campus, I was lost. The educational system that I was used to was so different from what was on offer her. Going on the York website was like losing myself in a maze full of infographics. I heard about centers for students' help like ACMAPS and other student clubs, mentoring, etc. but I didn't utilize them as much as I should have. The first year I was just focused on education. However, I took benefit of the opportunities provided during Covid through online workshops and events. I attended seminars, workshops, training (you name it!) for personal and professional growth. There were also mental health sessions that were helpful during this lockdown period. So, yes York gave me a wholesome experience.

**Alexandra:** The mistake I made at my old university was that I didn't get involved with anything like social events. I really wanted to change it the second time around because that's what makes your university experience. At U of T I really just went to school, did my work, did my classes and then came back home there was nothing more. When I came to York I really wanted to change that to benefit me and to try to help others as well. I found out that there were organizations specifically for mature & transfer students @ York that really appealed to me and that I was able to meet people that knew what I was experiencing as a student.

***What are the main tips you would give incoming transfer students that you wish you knew when you started or that really helped you?***

***Beenish:*** Use the resources and help on offer, it is there for the taking!

***Alexandra:*** I would really recommend getting involved in any way you can, whether it's attending an event or volunteering it's really going to improve the social aspect and help you meet new people. For example, at ACMAPS we have Café Hours and peer mentor drop-ins that I host sometimes. I would recommend going to that even if you don't have any questions just to hang out and chat about anything really. We're all students we all know the stress so it's nice to just be able to unwind with a few students every now and then. I would just recommend putting yourself out there even though it may be a challenge at first you will end up thanking yourself later.

I'd like to thank Beenish and Alexandra for invaluable input for this blog and I hope their words reassure and inspire you! Don't forget, you can make an appointment to meet them as peer mentors [here](#) or join us at the [ACMAPS Peer Mentor Meet and Greet \(virtual drop-in\)](#) on January 13<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

ACMAPS has a number of events coming up for transfer and mature students in January. We have [Virtual Café Hour – Transfer Students Connect](#) on 12<sup>th</sup> January at 1pm. The [Virtual Coffee Break – Let's Talk Culture for Mature International Students! Ft ACMAPS](#) (January 19<sup>th</sup> at 11am) is a fun filled virtual coffee break with representatives from different cultural clubs at York University so make sure to register and learn how to be more involved with them. [Learning Skills Services](#) publish a monthly calendar which includes workshops such as Time Management, Critical Thinking and Exam Preparation. And as always, check out the full list of academic and wellness events (which is always being updated) for transfer and mature students that we do in collaboration with our campus partners [HERE](#)

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