OU Students Connect User Guide

This guide will take you through the essential features and functionalities of OU Students Connect, a platform designed to help students connect with other students.

Table of Contents

1. Getting Started

2. Setting Up Your Profile

3. Navigating the Dashboard

4. Sending Messages

5. Joining Groups and Discussions

6. Getting Support

1. Getting Started

1.1. Accessing the Platform

* Website: Visit the OU Students Connect platform at <https://www.oustudents.aluminate.net/>
* Login: Use your university credentials (the OUCU and password that you use to access Student Home) to log in. If you're a first-time user, follow the registration process to create your profile.

1.2 Registration Process

* Step 1: Enter your university OUCU.
* Step 2: Enter the password you use to access Student Home.
* Step 3: Complete your profile by providing your personal and academic information.

2. Setting Up Your Profile

How much information you add to your profile is completely up to you. If you're okay with adding a photo and more details, doing so could enhance your experience and help you connect better with other OU students.

2.1. Personal Information

* Profile Picture: Upload a photo of yourself.
* Bio: Write a brief introduction about yourself. You could include any interests or career aspirations you have.
* Contact Information: Share only the details you're comfortable with others seeing. Including your town or city will allow you to be featured on the interactive map available on the dashboard.

2.2. Academic Information

* Degree: Specify your current degree, module, and expected graduation date.
* Academic Achievements: List any academic awards, honours, or scholarships you may have.
* Skills: Add relevant skills that you have acquired through coursework or extracurricular activities.

2.3. Privacy Settings

* Adjust your privacy settings to control who can view your profile and contact you.

3. Navigating the Dashboard

3.1. Overview

The dashboard is your central hub on OU Students Connect, where you can access the platform’s features.

3.2. Key Sections

* Profile: View and edit your profile.
* Messages: Access your inbox for communication with other students.
* Groups: Join Support Groups that are aligned to protected characteristics.

4. Sending Messages

4.1. Starting a Conversation

* Go to the Messages section and click on New Message.
* Select a person from your list and compose your message.

4.2. Message Etiquette

* Be polite and respectful in your communication.
* Introduce yourself and state the purpose of your message clearly.
* Keep your messages concise and to the point.

4.3. Responding to Messages

* You will receive an email notification about messages sent to your inbox.
* Use the Reply option to continue a conversation or start a new thread if necessary.

5. Joining Support Groups and Discussions

5.1. Exploring Support Groups

* Under the Support Group tab, you will find our Groups that are aligned to protected characteristics.

5.2. Joining a Support Group

* Before joining a Support Group, please ensure you have signed up to be a member via our website. There will be a joining link on the Apply page.
* Click on Join Group to become a member of any Support Group.
* Introduce yourself in the Group and start participating in discussions.

5.3. Starting and Contributing to Discussions

* Start a new discussion by clicking on New Discussion within a Support Group.
* Respond to existing discussions by adding your thoughts in the comments.

6. Getting Support

6.1. Contacting Support

* If you need further assistance, contact the support team via the Contact Us form, found on the Dashboard.
* Provide a detailed description of your issue to receive the best support.

6.2. Reporting Messages

* If you come across any inappropriate behaviour on discussion pages, please report it using the Report Message feature.
* To report a message, click on the three dots next to it and select Report Message. A pop -p will appear where you can categorise the message as Spam, Abusive or Other. Be sure to use the description box to tell the moderator why you’re reporting the message.

Thank you for using OU Students Connect! We hope this guide helps you make the most out of your experience.