

[www.DiscoverSikhi.com](http://www.DiscoverSikhi.com)

*A family forum where you can discuss and share information.*

## “How do I find out where the nearest Gurdwara is?”

You can ask your local Sikh Soc, or alternatively find out from the Boss website: <http://www.boss-uk.org/gurdwara/>



## “What do Sikh Societies do?”

Throughout the year Sikh Soc will be organising all sorts of events from paintballing, meditation classes, interesting discussions, theme park trips, charity events and much more... On a wider scale Sikh Weeks and national events will help you link up with other like-minded people from all across the country. Finally in the summer there is the ‘Sikhi Camp’, which is a week long fun-packed camp in an exotic location for those who want to get to know everyone better and wish to get in touch with their roots and have opportunity to make friends with other students from across the UK.

## “If I missed signing up to my university’s Sikh Society then how can I go about joining up and finding about events?”

You can either contact your local Student Union and ask for the contact details for Sikh Society and whether they have any regular meetings, or you can go on the B.O.S.S. (British Organisation of Sikh Students) website and find out your Sikh Society’s details.



# Discover Sikhi

## Student Advice & Support

## Student Advice & Support



## Welcome

*Starting university is a big step for everyone. You will have fears, worries, aspirations and hopes. This leaflet hopes that you can dispel your worries and fears about starting university and offer you practical support and guidance.*

### “I have just started university and feeling lonely.”

Leaving home, family and friends and coming to a new environment, where you don't know anyone is always a big step. However, you are not the only one in this situation. Every first year student is in the same position. Always remember that the Guru is with you. You feel the Guru is with you when you begin to read Gurbani and do Ardaas. If you can't read Gurmukhi, then read English translation of Gurbani, or you can also play an audio of Keertan or Paath. Keertan, Paath and soothing Simran can be downloaded from: [www.sikhroots.com](http://www.sikhroots.com)



### “I don't know how to make friends or where to meet people.”



*“When You are on my side, Lord, what do I need to worry about?” (Ang 1096)*

Firstly, don't worry. Have faith in Vaheguru. If you see a group of people together, don't get disheartened and think, you don't know anyone. They might have known each other from before or met one another in lectures, at Sikh Society and through friends. From personal experience it takes time. There are times when you will think you don't know anyone but come the end of the year you will have found like-minded people. Whenever you

misquoted with the aim that you abandon your faith and convert to extremism beliefs.

**Character reform:** Where mind manipulation is used to convert an individual to extremism through recognized psychological techniques such as 'mind control', 'undue influence', 'coercive persuasion', and 'thought reform'.

**Racially motivated sexual exploitation:** The sexual-abuse of young girls on the basis of their religion/beliefs race/ethnicity or colour motivated by extremist religious views and/or racism.



If you are being targeted by anyone to convert or know someone who is, please contact the Sikh Helpline the soonest possible:  
w: [www.SikhHelpline.com](http://www.SikhHelpline.com)  
t: 0845 644 0704 (free 24hrs confidential helpline)  
e: [info@sikhhelpline.com](mailto:info@sikhhelpline.com)

The Sikh Helpline treats all information in the strictest confidence and helps you to the fullest extent. Remember, you are not alone!

### “How do I go about finding out more information about Sikh history, beliefs and way of life?”

Firstly, join your university Sikh Society. Keep up-to-date with events and talks taking place near you on [www.boss-uk.org](http://www.boss-uk.org). There are many resources available online for you to find out about Sikh history and beliefs. However, be aware that there are some misleading websites that have incorrect information on them either out of ignorance or to misguide others.

#### Useful websites:

[www.Sikhism101.com](http://www.Sikhism101.com)

Q & A on different aspects of Sikhi from modern issues to Sikh philosophy.

[www.SriGranth.org](http://www.SriGranth.org)

You can read Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with English translation.

Good sangat (company) is very important. Keep the company of uplifted souls through Sikh Society, go to the Gurdwara, and attend Keertan programmes.

### **“I feel I am being bombarded with questions by non-Sikhs in attempt to undermine my faith. I feel as if I am being bullied and harrassed. What should I do?”**

Either a person can be genuinely enquiring about your faith and beliefs for their own personal understanding and enrichment of their knowledge, or they could be asking you questions (which they most likely know the answers to) to belittle you and make you feel inferior as part of an agenda to push their own ideology and religious beliefs on you. You can easily decipher between by telling them “*I don’t know so please don’t ask*” or “*I am still learning about Sikhism and don’t know the full answers. If you want to educate yourself about the Sikh faith I suggest you go to the library and get a book or search the Internet.*” A genuine person would stop there and respect your decision not to discuss. On the other hand, an extremist who has an agenda of converting you through aggression or grooming will persist.

The government’s Department of Further Education and Skills (DFES) has acknowledged the fact that violent extremism in the name of Islam exists across UK universities, as consequence of which they have issued guidelines to universities. “*Up to 48 British universities have been infiltrated by fundamentalists and the threat posed by radical groups must be ‘urgently addressed’, according to Prof Anthony Gleees*” (BBC News, Fri 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 2006).

**Tactics used by extremists who operate in groups or individuals:**

**Extremist Grooming** - The gradual process of conversion to extremism: through the process of undermining your current faith and character reform.

**Undermining your faith:** When the rituals, concepts and philosophy of your current faith are ridiculed, undermined, misinterpreted and

you see someone always smile and be friendly and confident. You will meet many people at university, some of them will not be like you or have the same interests as you. However, inevitably you will meet like-minded company who will more than likely be friends for life. Through doing as much Simran as possible one will avoid bad company with Vaheguru’s Grace.

### **“I am unsure of whether I should go to clubs and bars?”**



Whatever you do in life, imagine Guru Gobind Singh Jee is watching you and is with you. If Guru jee saw a CCTV video of you being somewhere, you must ask yourself, would you feel embarrassed or comfortable with that idea? If you would feel comfortable with Guru Gobind Singh jee, knowing where you have been socialising and hanging out then all the best to you and may Vaheguru bless you. However, if you would feel embarrassed, even the slightest, then you must ask yourself, “*Why are you at that place and is it worth being there?*”

There are two paths that one can take in life: (1) path of respect & dignity, or (2) path of shame and dishonour. Would you risk being with anyone or doing anything that would bring shame and dishonourment to yourself, to your family or to your religion? Everyone will say “*Come with me*”, “*Let’s go here*”, “*So what, your parent’s aren’t here*” and so on and justify going to places where people degrade their bodies and self-respect by wearing little clothing, getting drunk, and losing their inhibitions. Being in the wrong place, with the wrong people or wrong atmosphere can lead you to making a mistake without thinking and then regretting it for the rest of your life. You must decide what is best for you. A good motto to keep in mind: “*Respecting your parents is not what you do in front of your parents but what you get up to behind their backs.*”

## “Is it okay to have friends of the opposite gender?”

*“Men should look at the opposite gender as mothers, sisters and daughters, (women should look at the opposite gender as fathers, brothers and sons).”*

*(Naar 29, PauRee 11 - Bhai Gurdaas Jee)*

Having friends who are girls or boys is fine. However, a Sikh male treats and respects every female as a mother, sister or daughter; and a Sikh female treats and respects every male as a father, brother or son.

The possible benefits of girlfriend and boyfriend relationships is that one “thinks” that he or she has someone who cares for them by their side and that they feel love or compassion. On the other hand, the downside of these relationships is one becomes emotionally attached to the other person which inevitably causes anguish, heartache and misery. For example, how many times do you know someone, who has cried over a girlfriend or boyfriend in the past? According to Sikhi the true relationship is between God and the soul.



Intimate relationships at any level are harmful - whether it is physical intimacy or emotional one. Intimacy on any level (physical or emotional) should be restricted to one’s husband or wife; who are each others committed life partners. If you send texts, emails or chat to someone and you feel embarrassed or ashamed as a result of someone else reading your text, email or over hearing your conversation, then that tells you that you shouldn’t be doing it.

*“O sexual desire! (Taking hold of the person) you lead to hell and make them wander in reincarnation through countless species. You cheat the consciousness, and pervade the three worlds (i.e. the whole world). You destroy meditation, penance and virtue.”*

*(Ang 1358)*

## “How can I find my future partner at university without stepping over the mark and doing anything wrong?”

Parents often say, “Find a suitable person to marry at uni”, meaning well. However, at the end of the day Vaheguru is always thinking out for you, so have faith in Him. You don’t need to look out for girls and boys to get married to and keep thinking this when meeting someone at university, rather leave it to Vaheguru. Focus on what’s most important, building the relationship with Vaheguru - He will look after everything else, including getting married.

## “I am feeling low and depressed. What can I do?”



Understandably with the stress, deadlines and pressures of university, we fall in the trap of feeling overworked, lacking energy and generally run down feeling. However, to counteract this feeling everyone needs regular uplifting, peaceful and calming influences. Some people resort to “having a pint or two” but this actually makes depression worse and doesn’t do your body or mind any favours. The guaranteed cure for depression is VAHEGURU SIMRAN (meditating on ‘Vaheguru’). Take some time out and focus your attention and mind on the virtues of Vaheguru, sing, listen and enjoy the peace that remembering Vaheguru brings.

A good starting point and what works for a lot of people is doing Vaheguru Simran or listen to a Simran CD whilst getting ready in the morning, revising/ doing coursework, and just before bedtime. To download Simran audios, visit: [www.sikhroots.com](http://www.sikhroots.com)