As I write this, my eldest child has just started Year 2 of his Psychology degree at Durham University, and I am preparing my daughter for her first year at the University of Sheffield. Both of my children are so different in personality and outlook in life, yet the one thing I knew would be beneficial for them both was going to university and getting a degree.

As a parent, I would like to share my 3 biggest concerns about my child starting university and how these were alleviated:

1. Worries about whether my child would get on with his work - Thankfully universities, like schools do care about the progress of their students and will monitor absences and provide additional support for those students that need it.

2. Worries about whether my child was going to fit in and make friends - The university held events before formal lectures started to encourage students to meet new people and make new friends. This was reassuring and my son found other students on his course which made him feel at ease.

3. Worries about workload and stress - I found that the university gently eased students into university and did not pile on the pressure too much in Year 1. The transition from A levels to his degree felt smooth and enabled him to do well in Year 1 and has helped build his confidence.

If you are a parent considering whether to encourage your child to apply to university, I would say that the benefits outweigh any apprehensions you may have. University is commonly associated with increasing knowledge and new learning, but I think it is so much more than this. I have seen first-hand how my child has flourished in the short space of a year at university. Having a proper taste of freedom and being ‘grown up’, my child has immersed himself fully into student life, made new friends and relished in the responsibilities thrust upon him.

I know when my daughter starts university in the coming weeks, she too will develop skills which are an essential part of life, not just her career. These skills include organisation, problem solving, communication and character building. Recently, I read an article that said university teaches students not just about academic learning but also about learning about themselves and how they fit into their environment. I can say that this resonates with what I have seen with my son and how he has become much more socially responsible and aware of his environmental impact.

As a parent, we always want what is best for our child and encourage that which will enrich their lives. From my experience thus far, I would confidently say that university has been the best decision we made and well worth the investment for both of my children.