# Cycle to work - FAQs

## Question 1: What is the safest route to ride?

In order to plan your route and feel confident riding on streets we recommend the free one-to-one ‘[Ride in Traffic’ training](https://beeactive.tfgm.com/cycling/courses-and-bike-maintenance/#cycle-training-ride-with-confidence) on offer from Transport for Greater Manchester (TFGM). The qualified instructor will help you plan and then ride a route between your home and workplace, show you how to take the safest positions in traffic and how to communicate with others on the road.

Hawys Williams, a Wellbeing Champion told us: “I was nervous about the traffic which stopped me commuting for the first few years I worked at the Uni - that changed when I went on a 1:1 TFGM session - 'Ride in Traffic' - a trainer planned my commute route with me - we then cycled it together with them giving me tips along the way - commuted by bike ever since.”

Remember to ride safely. Cyclists are bound by the [Highway Code](https://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/rules-for-cyclists.html), along with all road users. Changes have been made to the Highway Code in recent years, so it’s important that you know and understand current legislation. Rules of the Highway Code using "must/must not" are legal requirements.

Cassandra Hodgkinson, a member of UMBUG and Wellbeing Champions, shared three additional pieces of safe cycling advice:

* Ensure your lights are working, especially in the winter. USB rechargeable ones are great.
* Don't cycle with headphone on/in. It's important to be able to hear the traffic.
* Always carry a puncture repair kit and/or spare inner tube.

## Question 2: I’m a bit nervous about cycling on roads. What would you recommend?

If you feel nervous about riding a bike, that's ok. Lack of confidence is a common barrier for new riders.

Being a more confident rider will help you enjoy more routes, and rides. The keys to being more confident riding are (1) knowing what to do, (2) practising what you've learned, and (3) being able to turn to a community of people who will help support your riding.

1. TfGM have some free sessions for building your confidence – check them out **c**[[ycling skills and bike maintenance courses | TfGM Bee Active](https://beeactive.tfgm.com/cycling/courses-and-bike-maintenance/)](https://beeactive.tfgm.com/cycling/courses-and-bike-maintenance/). Love to Ride have some [great online short courses](https://www.lovetoride.net/gm/courses?locale=en-GB) to help build confidence from riding on the road to bike handling.

Susan Crofts from UMBUG says “Be assertive - you have as much right to be on the road as motorised vehicles: ride away from the curb - the closer to it you ride, the closer you'll be passed; the further away from it you ride, the more room you'll be given.“

1. Once you’ve gained the knowledge, practice! Start easy and slowly build your confidence in more challenging environments.

One of our wellbeing champions, Emma Marshall, also suggests, “Doing a weekend ride along your commute route before your first cycle to work. That way you'll feel more confident the first time and not worry about missing a meeting if it takes much longer than you anticipated!”

1. Join the UMBUG community, UoM’s bike user group. There is a Facebook group and mailing list with hundreds of members. Ask questions, find someone to ride with, join a monthly meet-up and get notifications of events taking place – this friendly group are always keen to help!

## Question 3: Where can I store my bike?

We have a number of cycle shelters located across campus – [view our map](https://www.google.co.uk/maps/%4053.4684575%2C-2.2330436%2C15z/data%3D%213m1%214b1%214m2%216m1%211s1_hWGXBnG02vjY4dLD7qSfK-C8VA?entry=ttu) to find your nearest one. These are available for use by staff and postgraduates. You will need to visit the car parking office to activate your staff ID card to gain entry.

These are only as secure as the people that use them so please:

1. Close the doors of the bike shelters behind you, don’t let anyone tailgate.
2. If there is somebody behind you ask to see their University ID.
3. If you see anyone suspicious please report via the [Safezone app](https://www.welcome.manchester.ac.uk/get-ready/health-wellbeing-safety/safezone/) or ring Campus Support and Security on 0161 306 9966 (on the back of your ID card)

There are also over 3,500 cycle parking stands on campus that can be used. Remember to secure your bike with a gold standard D-lock; if you [register your bike with Security](https://survey.manchester.ac.uk/pssweb/index.php/954626/lang-en) you can claim a discounted [University-approved D lock](https://www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/services/security/ourservices/crimereduction/cyclesecurity/)!

## Question 4: Where can I shower on campus?

There are showers available for use across campus – [view the map](https://www.google.co.uk/maps/%4053.4684575%2C-2.2330436%2C15z/data%3D%213m1%214b1%214m2%216m1%211s1_hWGXBnG02vjY4dLD7qSfK-C8VA?entry=ttu) for the ones closest to you. If you have space, try to leave a towel and toiletries at work, to save you having to carry them backwards and forwards every day.

If your ride is less than 30 minutes, chances are you can just ride in your normal work clothes. Unless you want to ride fast, you can just cruise into work on your bike.

Julia Durkan, Sustainability Manager, says: “I cycle at a leisurely pace from Stretford which takes about 30mins. I normally just wear my work clothes but sometimes cycle in a t-shirt and change into a different top when I arrive at work.”

## Question 5: is there any help towards purchasing a bike?

The [Cycle to Work Scheme](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/people-and-od/benefits/travel-to-work/cycling/cycle-to-work/) enables you to purchase bikes, safety accessories and clothing for your commute with savings of up to 37% (t’s&c’s apply).

University staff can also [hire an e-cycle free of charge](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/people-and-od/benefits/travel-to-work/cycling/cycle-to-work/free-ecycle-trial/) for up to 4 weeks to ‘try before you buy’ and discover whether this type of bike would be suitable for your commute. The electric assistance on e-cycles helps to make journeys much easier allowing longer distances to be cycled and hills to be tackled without breaking a sweat.

Hannah Rundle, Director of Faculty Operations, Humanities says: “I was able to hire a bike through the brilliant scheme we offer here at UoM. It took me a while to get confident on the roads, so it is great for four weeks, and by the end I loved it!“

* More information on cycling to work can be found at <https://www.sustainability.manchester.ac.uk/travel/staff/cycling/>