



First thoughts about Higher Education (HE)

Have you thought about Higher Education?

The great thing about Higher Education is that there is a such wide variety of options, there is likely to be something that interests you.

Even if it's not something you've considered before - or something you don't know much about - it's worth finding out more about the types of course available, where you can study and what it's like to be a student, so you can make an informed decision about whether higher education could be for you.

What is Higher Education?

Higher Education, often called HE, is the name given to a course that you can do at a university or college.

Courses usually last 3-4 years, and you'd generally start the course when you are around 18, after leaving school. When you have finished the course, you will have a qualification known as a degree.

There are plenty of different reasons that people want to go university and get a degree: to get a skilled job like a doctor or teacher, to earn more money, to gain independence and confidence, to try out new experiences and meet lots of people along the way!

Higher Education isn't much like school; you have much more control over your time and choices, so if you have struggled at school don't let that affect your decision. You may have some classes that are taught in groups (called lectures) and other times when you are working in small groups or on your own.



Want to find out about Higher Education courses in York?

visit www.higheryork.org

Who goes to Higher Education?

A wide range of people studying Higher Education courses, from all different backgrounds and skill levels, and from all over the world. One of the great things about HE is that it's an opportunity to meet lots of new people that you wouldn't otherwise have come across - many students find lifelong friends at university or college.

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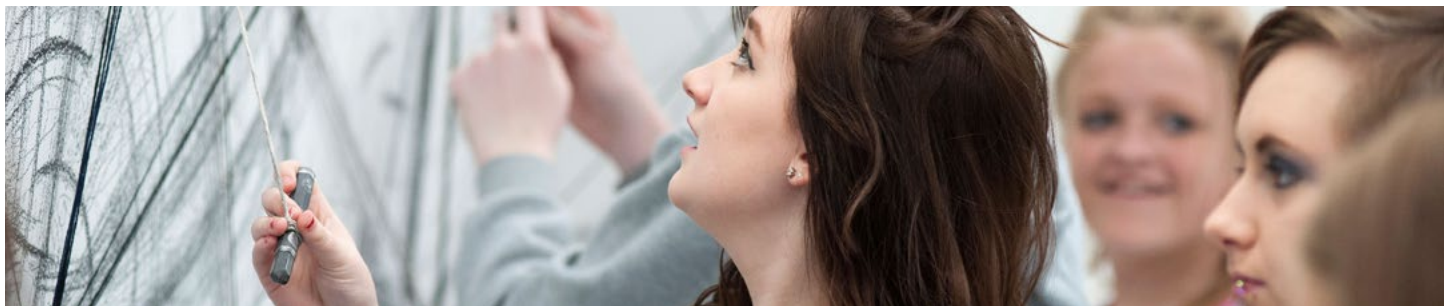
Where can I go?

There are over 300 different places in the UK that you could choose to study a Higher Education course. It's totally up to you where you choose to go, whether you would prefer somewhere really close to home, somewhere far away or even in a different country!

All HE institutions are different in style, feel and size, so you should have a look at their websites and go and visit them at an open day to get a better idea of what it would be like to be a student there.

Some of them are campus based, which means that everything is in one place, and some have their buildings spread across a city.

Something to remember is that it's not just universities that offer HE courses, some colleges offer them too.



What can I study?

Well, here's the great thing!

For almost anything you can think of, there will be a Higher Education course that you can study.

There are thousands and thousands of courses out there for you to choose from (over 40,000!), so you are very likely to find at least one you think you would love.

To give you flavour of the less well known subjects, you could study: Animal management, Folk Music, Archaeology, Film Make-up and Prosthetics, Animal Behaviour, Sports Coaching and Physical Education... there really is a huge choice.

What do I need to get in?

Most of the time you will need to have certain grades from your GCSEs and A-Levels (or from equivalent qualifications). Entry requirements vary significantly between courses and between HE institutions, so it's worth checking the requirements on course websites for the courses you're interested in.

What if I don't have the right grades?

This isn't always a deal breaker - whilst it is always beneficial to have the grades that they require, you can still sometimes get onto a course in HE. In this situation you could call the university or college and talk to them about your options because they could still accept you.

Another option if you don't get the right grades would be to take an Access to Higher Education Diploma, which is a course that prepares you for a degree. There are lots of different routes into HE - having the required A-Level results is just one of them.



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How much will it cost?

You do have to pay to take a Higher Education course, but there is a lot of financial support available to make it affordable for everyone.

You may have heard that courses cost up to £9,000 a year, but you don't have to pay any of this until you have a job after the course and are earning enough money.

There are loans available that can help you with all costs, including the course fees and accommodation.

Remember, it doesn't matter what background someone comes from, Higher Education is for everyone!

So what is student life like?

It is no secret that most students will say that it is the best years of their life!

Whilst studying a degree you could be learning about your favourite subject, making great friends, spending a lot of time socialising and going out, becoming more independent and confident, living away from home for the first time, maybe working part-time to earn some extra money, attending clubs and societies of things you love, pushing yourself to get the best degree you are capable of and whatever else you can fit in.

Sounds good right?

If you think so, then perhaps HE is for you!



Want to know more
about Open Days?

visit www.higheryork.org

A little help with some commonly used words...

BA: You may hear people refer to a degree as a BA. This means Bachelor of Arts, and is the name of one of the most common types of degree that you can do.

Campus: The place where all of the university or college's buildings are located.

College: A place where students can attend to get A-Levels and other courses, sometimes including degrees.

Degree: The name of the qualification you will have once you have completed a Higher Education course.

Essay: A piece of writing that you might be asked to do on the course.

Fresher: A first-year student on a degree course.

Graduate: Someone who has completed a degree.

Halls: The name given to student accommodation.

Lecture: A class at on a degree course.

Loan: This is a sum of money that is given to you that you will have to pay back at some point in the future.

Masters: This is a course, often for one year, that you can do after you have completed a degree, that is harder and covers a subject in more detail.

PhD: This is an abbreviation of Doctor of Philosophy. It is something you may do after a degree and masters. It usually takes about four years and requires you to do lots of research into a topic. Once you have one of these you can add 'Dr' to the beginning of your name.

Postgraduate: Someone who has completed a degree and is returning to university to complete another course at a higher level, perhaps a Masters or PhD.

Prospectus: A document that has information on what a university or college offers. You can ask for these to be posted to you at home to have a look at (usually for free!) and can view them online.

Seminar: A smaller class that allows students to discuss topics together.

Undergraduate: Someone who is currently studying for their first degree.

University: Where students can attend to get degrees and other higher qualifications like Masters and PhDs.

Useful websites

Yor-zone Futures 4 Me

Futures4Me tells you everything you need to know about education and employment in York.
www.yor-zone.org.uk/YorZone/futures4me



Student Finance England

Student Finance England have all the information you will need regarding the financial support available.
www.gov.uk/student-finance



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Student finance

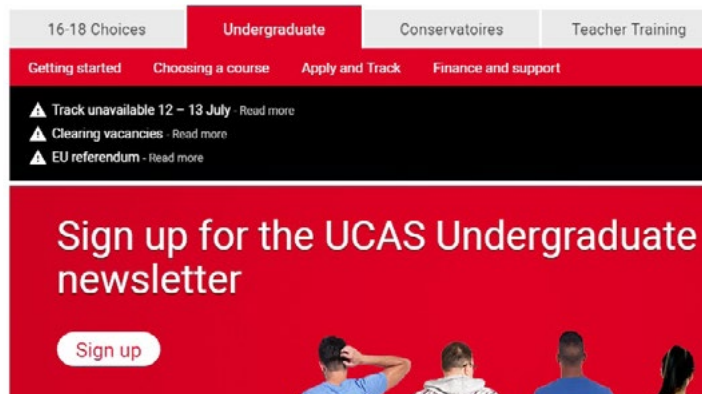
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UCAS

The Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) website is where you apply for a higher education course, but also has a course search tool and lots of other useful information about HE.

www.ucas.com

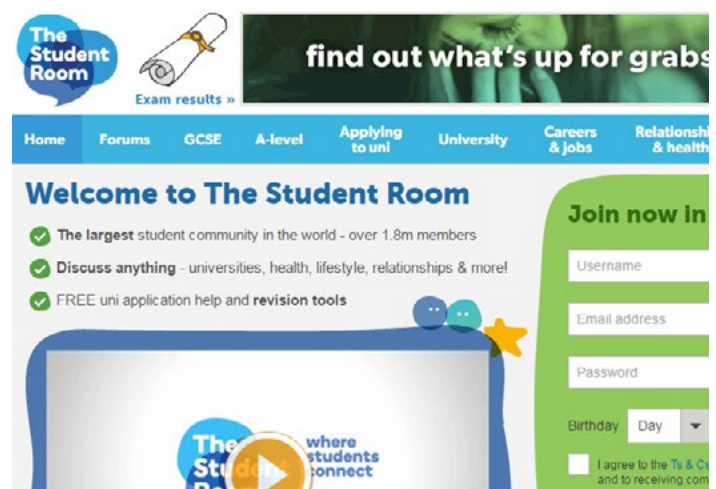
UCAS At the heart of connecting people to higher education



The Student Room

This is a student community site covering a wide range of topics.

www.thestudentroom.co.uk



Part of
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