

WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION?

A higher education (HE) course is an advanced level course which you usually study after you reach 18.

Higher education courses are usually studied at universities and some colleges also provide HE courses. There are other higher education providers where you can study your course too.

Course types

Most people work towards a degree at university, but there are other options, such as foundation degrees, Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and higher level apprenticeships, which may also be offered by colleges.

Although many people go on to HE when they're 18, you might to choose to go later on or defer a place to have a 'gap year'. Courses usually last 3 years, but this can vary depending on the subject, qualification or if a placement year is taken. You can even return to HE at any time and study for more qualifications after your degree such as a Masters degree or a PhD.

130 universities



379 colleges



37,000 courses

2,400 subjects

Popular courses include:



Higher York Network for Collaborative Outreach includes
 Askham Bryan College | Craven College | University of York
 York College | York St John University



HOW DO YOU STUDY?

Teaching at higher education level differs quite a lot to school and focuses much more on independent learning – you'll have to be good at organising your own time.

You will most likely have a number of teachers called tutors or lecturers who will cover different subject areas on your course.

Lectures

A lecture covers the main content of the subject to your entire class, usually this is a presentation by a lecturer and students are expected to take notes. Lectures take place in a large hall or lecture theatre and can last anytime between one and three hours.



Seminars

Seminars follow lectures as they are an opportunity to discuss the work in smaller groups.

Assessments/exams

Your course will be divided into different topics called modules and you'll have to complete assignments for each one. These could be presentations, essays, exams or group tasks and vary based on your course. In some courses, you may have to complete practical tasks or deliver presentations as part of your assessments.

Timetable

Your timetable is another aspect that varies depending on your course. This could change week by week and some students have a lot of lecture time, while others will have more time for seminars and lab work.

Don't forget that your free time is not just for socialising but for independent studying too.



WHERE WILL I LIVE?

There are a number of options available for where you can live while you study.

You can go to a university or college near where you already live and stay at home and commute. This means living at home and travelling to university or college for your lessons. This is perfect if you're a little nervous about leaving home completely or if the location is better for you to stay for work or family. It may also help with low accommodation costs.

Alternatively you can move away from home and live with other students, either in special student accommodation usually called 'a hall of residence' or 'halls', or in a rented house.

Most universities provide and manage accommodation for first year students. The process of applying for it and the facilities provided are generally the same across the country.

After you make friends you can live in a shared house during your 2nd and 3rd years - some students love the independence of living away from home.

You can bring your own stuff to decorate your room such as posters and photos, but most don't allow pets.

Although cooking, cleaning and washing for yourself sounds daunting, it is easy once you get started and you can always pop home as often as you like.

Options include:

Student Halls

Most first year students live in these. Most are run by the higher education provider but private companies can offer these as well. They usually have shared facilities like bathrooms and living areas.



Privately rented housing

Housing or flats that are rented to you by a private landlord or agency.

Shared student housing

A house or flat privately rented by several students with shared facilities like bathrooms and living areas.

The cost of accommodation will vary depending on where you choose to live but there will be plenty of affordable options. Leaving home for the first time may be scary but most first years are in the same boat and will share in your experience.



IS IT FUN BEING A STUDENT?

There is a lot to do as a student other than studying.

You might have a hobby that you want to continue at university or college; or it might be a chance to have a go at something you have never done before. If you choose to live away from home there's also a whole new place to explore.

By being a student you'll automatically be part of the Students' Union (SU). They're like your school council / college association. The SU will represent you, support you and organise all sorts of events and activities to entertain you.

As well as general activities, universities have a wide range of sports teams and you can play competitively or just for fun including football, netball and even Muggle Quidditch.

Don't worry if sport isn't your thing, universities have other clubs you can join such as course-related societies, debating groups, theatre, radio, choirs or a gaming society.

If you can't find a sport or society to fit your interest you can start your own!

Sports

Most universities have a wide range of sports teams and clubs you can join, whether you want to play competitively or just for fun.

Societies

Every university has different societies you can join – common ones include course-related societies, debating, political groups, theatre, radio, choirs and bands as well as more unique ones - and if you can't find the society for your interest you can start your own!



HOW DO I APPLY?

It is a good idea to start visiting potential universities and colleges in the summer between Year 12 and 13.

You can find out more about the subject/s you're interested in, explore the facilities and speak to current HE students. Most Higher Education Providers will have Open Days/Evenings advertised on their websites.

You can apply through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), a central organisation which processes applications.

You can have up to 5 choices of different courses and HE providers when you apply through UCAS.

All courses require you to write a personal statement and several may also require you to attend an interview or take a written examination as well. You'll get plenty of opportunity to prepare for these beforehand so you don't worry.

The deadline for applying for most courses is 15th January but it is earlier for some subjects such as medicine.

There is plenty of advice and support if you might not achieve the necessary qualifications to enter your course, including alternative options such as Clearing.



HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Higher education providers charge for courses but you can usually get a special loan for this, called a 'student loan', which you pay back gradually, once you've finished your course.



The course costs, also known as 'tuition fees' range between £6,000 - £9,000 per year¹ for a full-time HE course. You can apply for a student loan to pay for this. You do not pay any of this back until after you graduate and are earning over £21,000.

Other costs to plan for include your accommodation, any travel, food and social activities. These vary with every place and every person. There are also options, such as maintenance loans, available to help you cover these costs. Some universities and colleges have additional bursaries and grants available as well as extra financial help for looked after students and young carers.

Many students get a part time job for extra money whilst studying, but it is also a good idea to save before you start your course in preparation for living away.

¹ As of 2016/17, check higher education providers for most accurate fee costs



FIND OUT MORE...



Websites

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|---------------------------|------------------------|
| > Higher York | higheryork.org |
| > Askham Bryan College | askham-bryan.ac.uk |
| > Craven College | craven-college.ac.uk |
| > University of York | york.ac.uk |
| > York College | yorkcollege.ac.uk |
| > York St John University | yorksjs.ac.uk |
| > UCAS | ucas.com |
| > Unistats | unistats.direct.gov.uk |