

# Choosing Your Degree



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Produced by the  
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# Current Interests and Skills

**Download and print the worksheets to go alongside your reading and help you compare all your options.**



One of the most important things to consider when choosing a university degree is to pick a subject you enjoy, are interested in and what motivates you.

Start by thinking about your favourite subjects at school or college. Think about your interests outside your studies. If you draw, are part of sports teams, like to build or see how things work for example, you may find that a course pursuing these interests is right for you.

**Try completing the ‘Understanding your interests’ section in the worksheet.**

What skills and personality traits do you possess already? Some courses and jobs look for specific skills, for example if you want to be a paramedic or nurse you’ll need good communication and empathy. Think about what job roles suit your skill set or equally how you might need to develop to do the job you want.

**Try completing the ‘Assessing Your Skills’ section in the worksheet.**

Now you have had a think about your favourite subjects and skills, there are a few other areas outlined in the next section to consider when choosing a course. Remember, there are far more options at higher education level, many of which you won’t have heard of before.

# Choosing a Course

## Choosing a subject

- If you have a favourite subject, broaden the scope of what course that could lead to. For example if you like art in school, you could consider graphic design, fine art, textiles, illustration, fashion etc.
- Think about combining subjects you enjoy, for example if you like maths and physics, you could study engineering, which blends both of these subjects.
- If you know you like a subject but are not sure which specific area you would like to focus on, you could look for courses that have common modules in the first year, which allow you to get a better understanding of the industry, before you choose what to specialise in for the rest of your course. You can do this on some of the engineering courses at Huddersfield, for example.
- If you know you want to work in a particular industry, think about what specialisms you will need, and then look for courses that offer modules in those specialisms. Also look for courses that are validated by professional bodies, or allow you to gain any professional accreditations you'll require.
- Already have a job or career in mind? Research degree routes that lead to that job role. This may be clear for jobs like doctor or architect, but if your dream job is less common you may need to do some investigating.
- Consider the skills you came up with in the first section. Which degrees could use these skills? For example, if you're a strong writer with analytical skills, a psychology degree could be a good fit.

## Course Content

Course content is really important, as it will define the knowledge you'll gain throughout your degree. You may find that different universities offer the same course but they contain different modules and information. Courses at the University of Huddersfield are usually flexible and let you choose one or more optional modules each year, depending on your interests. It is a great opportunity to focus on something you really enjoy.

## Course Structure

There are now many options to choose from for how and when you can study. You can apply to full-time, part-time, offline and online courses as well as apprenticeship degrees. It depends what subject you choose to study and what will fit best with your lifestyle.

**Distance learning** - [hud.ac.uk/study/distance-learning/](https://hud.ac.uk/study/distance-learning/)

**Part time courses** - [hud.ac.uk/undergraduate/part-time-study/](https://hud.ac.uk/undergraduate/part-time-study/)

Think about how the course is set out. The way you learn can have a big impact on whether you enjoy the course or not. Some people excel in exams whereas others are better with a hands-on approach. You should also keep in mind the environment you will be learning in, along with the following points:

- Practical hands-on learning versus theoretical lectures and seminars?
- How many contact hours will you have on campus with your lecturers?
- How much personal study is expected?
- How will the course be assessed? Written exams, course work or practical exams?
- How many people will be on your course?
- Does the course have professional accreditations?
- What are the course facilities like?

## Entry Requirements

Entry requirements will depend on the course and university you apply for, and some courses will require a specific subject qualification, for example our Biochemistry course requires a Chemistry, A level. You can see the entry requirements for our courses through course finder on our website.

## Placements

Placements are a great way to gain work experience whilst studying for your degree and may give you a better idea of your job interests before you graduate. There can be a range of placement opportunities depending on the subject and course. The options the University of Huddersfield courses can provide are:

- A placement year (or shorter periods) with an employer
- Working freelance
- Set up your own business through an Enterprise Placement Year

## Foundation Years

A foundation year is an additional year at the beginning of a course that can be taken as a single course or as part of a degree. It is designed to provide a grounding in a subject, prepare students for higher level study and ensure they are ready for their degree.

There are different types of foundation years for students without the right subject qualifications or who didn't meet the entry requirements. The content varies, with some covering a broad range of subjects and others specific to the course that will be studied afterwards. Upon successfully completing the course, students may be able to progress immediately into the first year of their degree.



### Career & Graduate Prospects

When researching potential courses, look at common jobs and careers you can go into. Keep in mind that the career options noted in the course information are not the only options graduates can go on to do. Some graduates will get jobs in seemingly unrelated fields. Some industries will require a specific degree, but most graduate jobs will accept a range of degrees and will consider the skills related with being a university graduate. You could consider average graduate salaries for that course - but don't rely on that alone to make your choice.

Keeping your options open with a wider topic is recommended if you're unsure about your career beyond university.



### Changing Courses

If you start your studies and find you don't like the course, you may be able to change, but the process is very subjective and requires support from a university advisor. It will depend on your year of study, your accreditation and what course you would like to change from and to.

There are multiple courses which you can change after one year without any additional assignments/exams. For example, in the School of Applied Sciences at Huddersfield, you can swap between Biochemistry, Medical Biochemistry, Medical Biology and Medical Genetics after the first year.

**Note:** Many people who change courses or leave university all together do so because they don't like the subject or they chose a course based on someone else's advice, rather than doing their own research and making an informed decision.

**If you work through this document and do your research you can avoid changing later.**

# Considering Universities

## Choosing a university

Remember the course is where you will be spending a lot of your time, but it is a good idea to think about university life as a whole, as it will determine if you enjoy your experience.

You could really like your course but not the accommodation, which will affect your sleep and study time for example. Think about what you will spend your time doing beyond your course. Are there new clubs and societies you would like to get involved in, or do you want to continue a hobby you like already?

## Consider these areas and questions when thinking about university life:

### Campus

Single campus, multiple small campuses or non-campus? How big is the university and how close would lectures be to your accommodation?

### Location

Move away or stay at home and commute?  
City or town experience?  
What is the local area like?  
Think about shopping, transport, entertainment and experiences.

### Cost

Does the location affect how much it will cost?  
Think about rent, food, equipment and books, transport, society and club memberships etc.

### Facilities

What are the facilities like outside of your course?  
Do you like the library, gym and sports facilities, and the places to eat, drink and socialise?

### Accommodation

Is the accommodation shared? En-suite? Are there common areas and planned events?  
Is food included or a kitchen space available?

### Support

What support is there?  
Is it easy to access and available at all times?  
Think about financial, wellbeing, learning and career support.

**Now you have had a read through possible criteria for choosing a university, try completing the 'Making Informed Decisions' worksheet.**

### Visiting Universities

Once you have done your research and know what you are looking for from your university experience, you should attend Open Days for your top choices. You may find a university looks great on paper, but visiting it in person is the best way to find out if it feels right for you.

**Once you have attended Open Days, you can compare universities and courses using the 'Positives and Negatives' and 'University Scoreboard' worksheets.**



### Top Tips

- Don't worry too much and go with what feels right. You will gain skills and knowledge that you can use in many jobs and you don't know where the courses will take you yet.
- Avoid choosing a subject or university just because others are, or it is the easy choice.
- It's good to speak to friends and family to work through your thoughts and reasons you might want to study one over another - but remember it is your decision.
- Speak to careers professionals, admissions officers and current students for advice.
- Don't underestimate the vibe you get on Open Days. If you get a good feeling when you visit, you'll be excited to start and set your degree experience off on the right foot.





Your go-to guide on everything you need to know about university:

**[ucas.com/undergraduate/what-where-study](https://ucas.com/undergraduate/what-where-study)**

Find out what courses the University of Huddersfield has on offer:

**[hud.ac.uk/undergraduate](https://hud.ac.uk/undergraduate)**



A guide to completing your UCAS application form online:

**[ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication](https://ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication)**

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