Choosing Higher Education

inspiring choices
York & North Yorkshire

OfS Uni Connect Programme

Who are Inspiring Choices?

We support young people as they make decisions about their future education and career.

What we do:

- Run activities in schools and colleges
- Work with young people aged 15 and above
- Opportunities to consider future education options and how to achieve these
- 1 to 1 support
- Organise university campus visits

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Aims of the session

- The social, academic, and career benefits of Higher Education.
- Where and how you can study.
- The cost of Higher Education i.e. Student Finance.



What is HE?

Qualifications that you can choose to take after the age of 18. They can be gained from:

- Universities
- Colleges
- Degree Apprenticeships

There are **over 50,000** HE courses in the UK to choose from!

Examples of Higher Education Qualifications:

Bachelors Degree:



Masters Degree:



Higher National Certificate:



Higher National Diploma:



What can I study?

There are over **50,000** HE courses in the UK to choose from.

Most undergraduate courses last three years.

Some courses are more than three years:

- Foundation year
- Study abroad
- Year in industry
- Courses in Scotland
- Subjects such as architecture



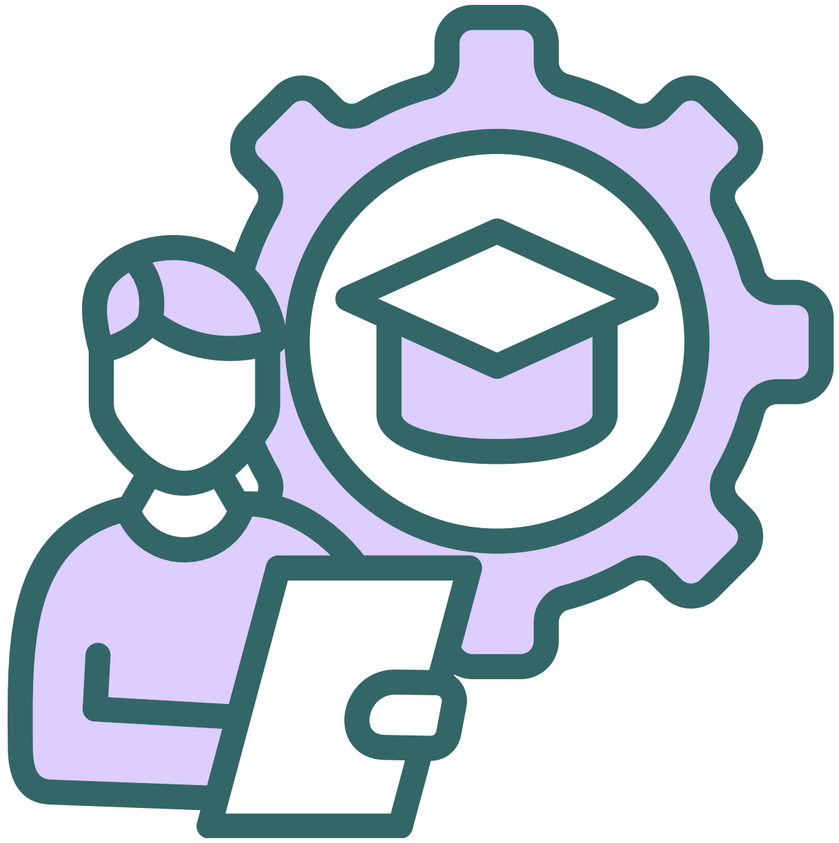
Toyota industrial placements.



Architectural Engineering at the University of Salford.

Degree Apprenticeships

- Employers and Universities work together to create a degree course.
- Degree apprenticeships take between 3 and 6 years.
- The employer pays your university fees, and you will graduate with a HE qualification.
- 80% of your time is spent in the workplace, the other 20% is spent studying or in training.
- **Find out more at UCAS:** https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships



Where can I study?

Would you prefer to live from home or move away?

Queen's University Belfast is located in Northern Ireland.

York St John University is located in central York.



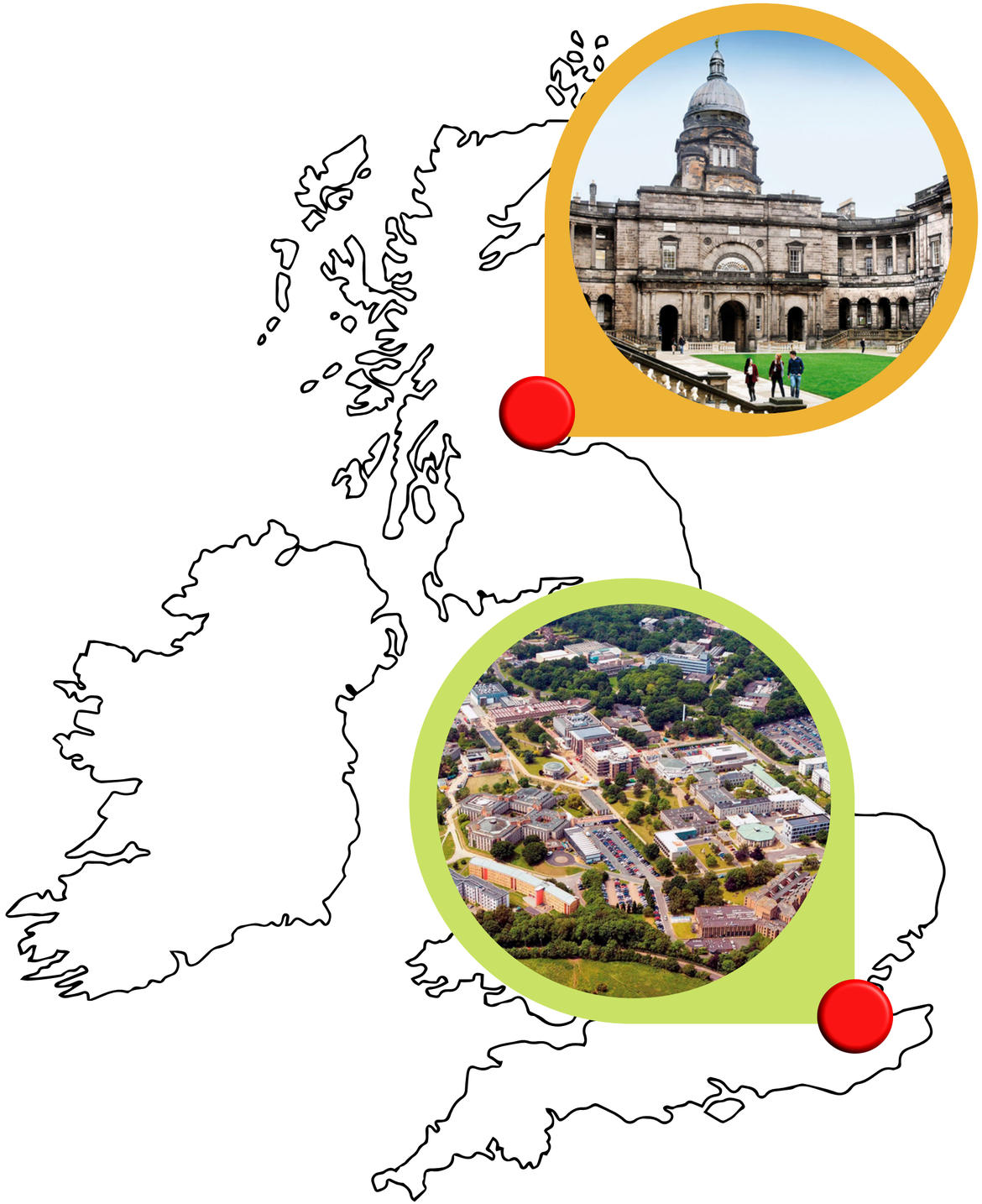


Where can I study?

Would you like to attend a campus university or a city university?

Edinburgh University is a city University in Scotland.

University of Kent is a campus University spread over 300 acres of land.



Where can I study?

Would you like to attend a large or small institution?

The University of Manchester has around 46,000 students in attendance.

Leeds Trinity University has around 5000 students in attendance.



Where can I study?

Would you like to attend a specialist institution?

Askham Bryan is a land based college with its own wildlife park.

UCFB is a University focussed around football courses. It has a campus in Manchester and at Wembley!



Where can I study?

Remember there are over 340 HE providers to choose from.

Take your time and find the right place for you!



Activity!

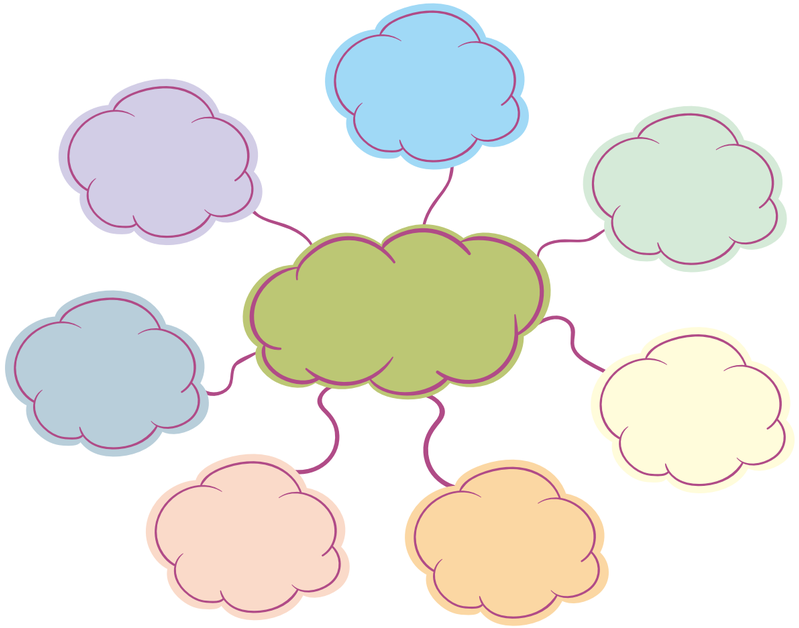
How does HE impact people's lives?

How does HE impact people's lives?

In this activity you will need to think about the ways higher education could impact people's lives, including your own!

You will need to:

- Split into small groups.
- Use the prompt you have been given. The prompt will say career, skill, student life, or independent living.
- Using your prompt, write down as many things as you can think of that relate to that area.
- After 5 minutes we will rotate the papers around the room and you will think about a new prompt.



How does HE impact people's lives?

- Meet new people and make new friends from around the world.
- Experience a student lifestyle.
- Gain workplace or travel experience.
- Study something you are passionate about.
- Attending HE is essential for some professions.
- Gain a sense of independence.



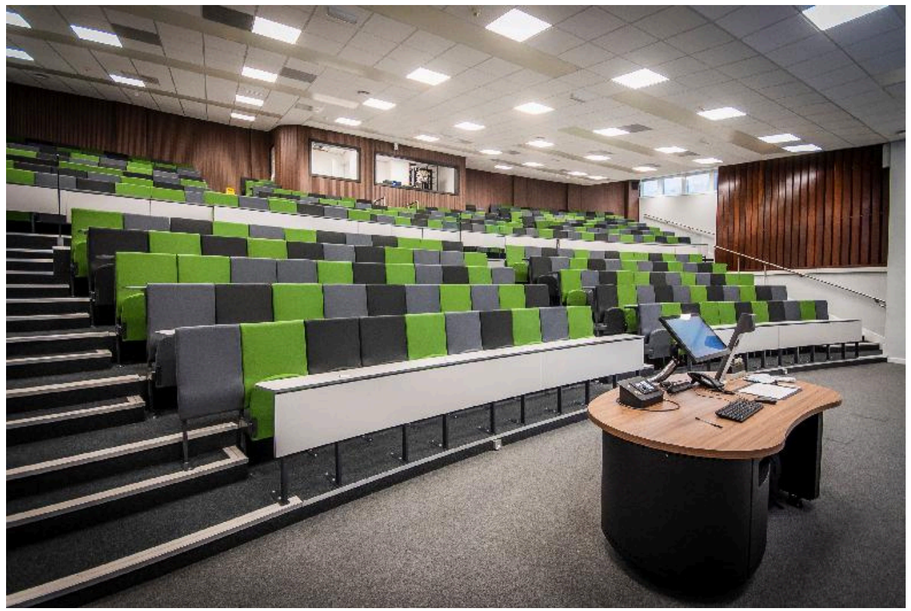




How and where will I study?

Lectures: large groups in lecture theatres.

Seminars: smaller groups in classrooms.



Curtis Auditorium at Newcastle University.



Seminar room (Bowland North) at Lancaster University.

How and where will I study?

Tutorials: very small groups, or 1-2-1 with a tutor.

Subject-specific: lab work, performance workshops, placements etc.



Tutorial room (Maclagan) at York St John University.



Film Studio for acting courses at Leeds Arts University.

Activity!

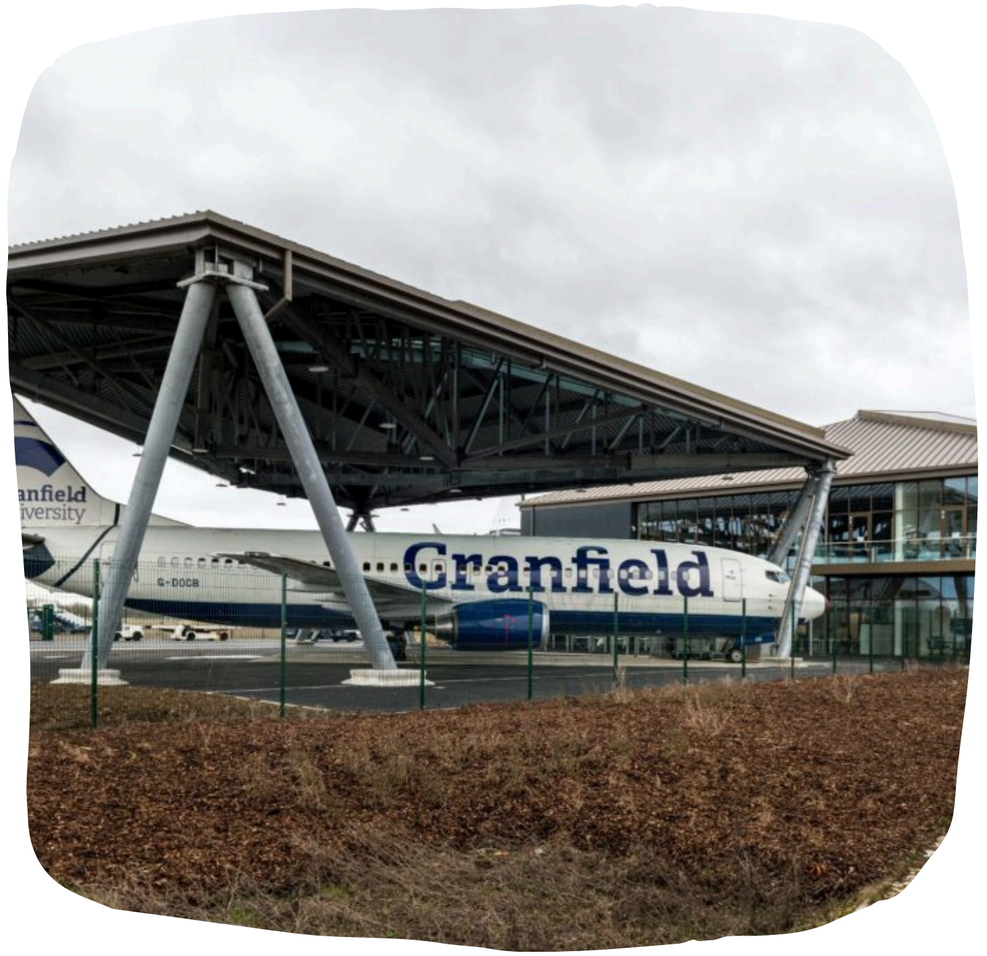
Real or Not Real

Looking at the HE facilities we are about to show you, which ones do you think are real or fake?

Cranfield University:
Airport

REAL

Cranfield Airport is owned and operated by Cranfield University, used by students for research purposes.



University of Salford:
Anechoic Chamber
(a room that absorbs sound)



REAL

At the University of Salford, their anechoic chamber is used for testing and measuring sounds, particularly very quiet ones like a raindrop!

University of Manchester:
Artificial Surf Wave Machine

FAKE

University of Manchester does not have an artificial wave machine, but you can study a Foundation Degree in Surf Science at Cornwall College.



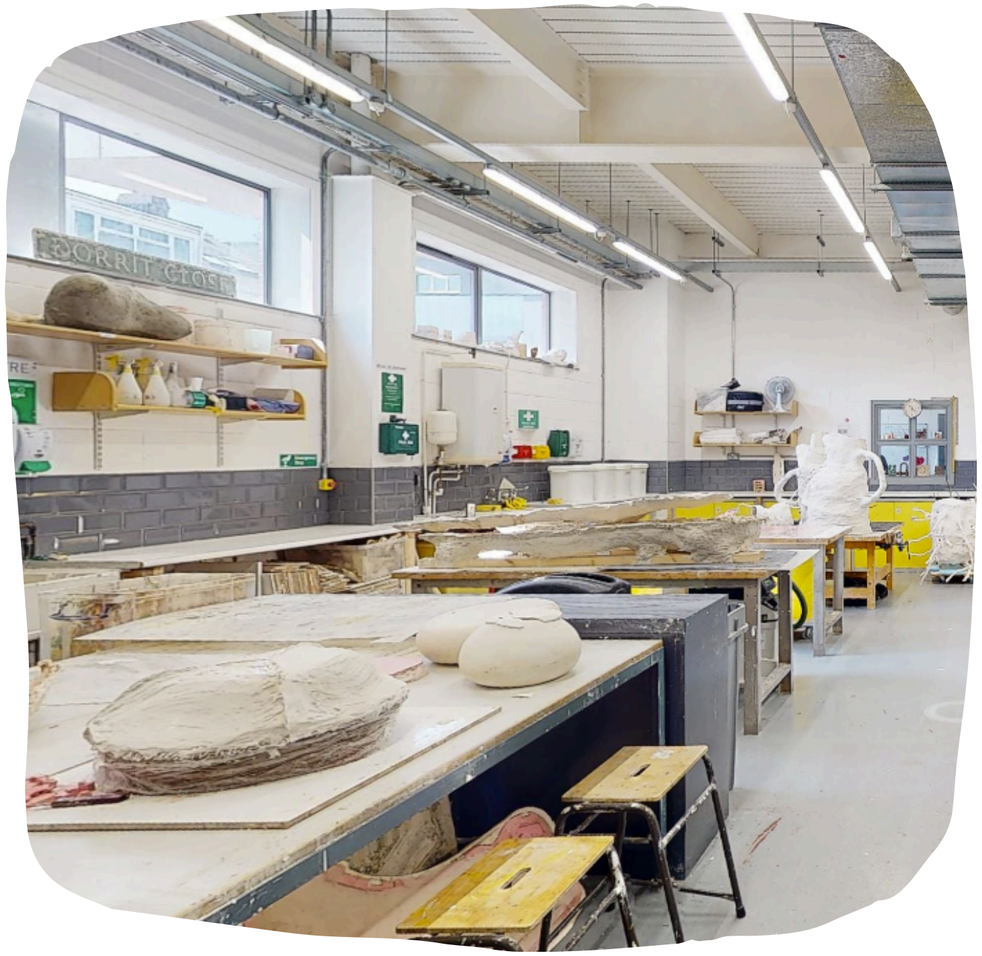
University of York:
Outdoor Archaeology Lab

REAL

University of York is home to the YEAR Centre, an outdoor experimental archaeology space where students can recreate experiments using past technologies.



Leeds Arts University:
Casting Studio



REAL

Leeds Arts University offers a range of workshops in their casting studio to teach students to create molds and cast ceramic items.

York St. John University:
Mock Hospital Ward

REAL

There are several mock hospital wards at York St John University, including a maternity ward with MamaAnne, a birthing simulator.



Newcastle University:
Zero Gravity Facility

FAKE

However, University of Newcastle is one of the leading institutions in Aerospace Engineering.

They have facilities such as wind tunnels, jet engines, flight simulators, and a drone flight zone.



What else can you do: Societies

What are societies?

Student-led groups formed around shared interests, hobbies, or academic goals. Examples could be:



Artists Society (York St John)



Medieval Society (University of Liverpool)



Doctor Who Society (University of Huddersfield)



Games Society (Leeds Beckett University)

Why join?

- Meet new people with shared interests.
- Find new interests.
- Develop new skills.

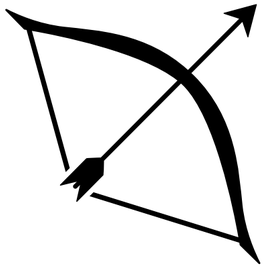
What else can you do: Sports

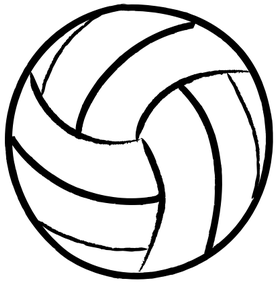
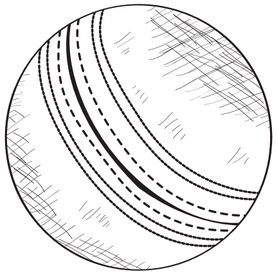
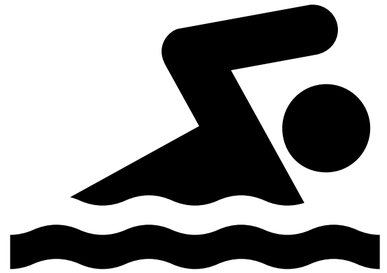
Competitive

- Travel across the country to compete in leagues against other universities.
- Access to specialist kit and equipment.
- Elite level coaching.

Recreational

- Play sports for fun, with no pressure to win!
- You can make friends and exercise in a fun way.

The cost of Higher Education

Student Finance is financial support provided by **Student Finance England**.

There are two types of loans you can apply for to help cover the costs of higher education:

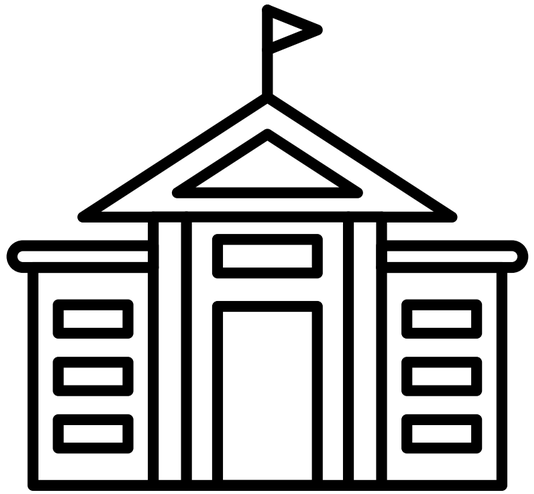
Tuition Loan: Money paid directly to the university, which covers the cost of your course.

Maintenance Loan: Money paid directly to you, which contributes to your living costs, including rent, bills, food, extracurricular activities, etc.

Tuition Loan

Tuition Fees: covers the cost of your course – teaching, access to facilities, essential field trips, student support services – which is currently **£9,790** (academic year 26/27).

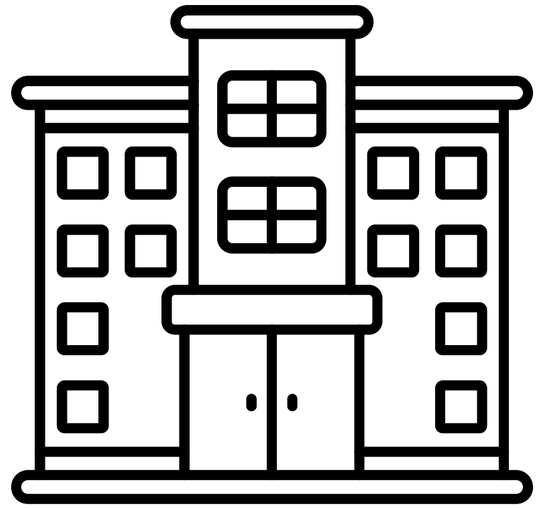
- Paid directly to the university.
- Paid to the university at the start of each term.



Maintenance Loan

Maintenance Loan: Money paid directly to you, which contributes to your living costs, including rent, bills, food, extracurricular activities, etc.

- Goes directly into your bank account.
- Given in three installments throughout the year at the start of each term (September/October, January, April).
- Amount you are eligible for depends on several factors, including: household income, living situation, and location.



Maintenance Loan

Living Situation	2026/27 Academic Year (max. loan)*
Living at home	£9,118
Living away from home	£10,830
Living away from home, in London	£14,135

*Support with living costs: 2026 to 2027 academic year.

Financial support



Different universities offer different bursaries and scholarships. Have a look around to see what you might be eligible for!

Many students are also eligible for other sources of funding.

Scholarships → Highly competitive and awarded based on excellence, e.g. academic, sporting, musical etc.

Bursaries → Based on financial or other need. They are non-competitive and usually automatic. They can include first generation bursaries, young carer bursaries, and more.

Disabled Students Allowance → You are provided funded support, which could cover things like specialist technology, travel costs to university, non-medical helpers, etc.



This money does **not need to be repaid**.

Student Support

Universities will offer support throughout your time with them.

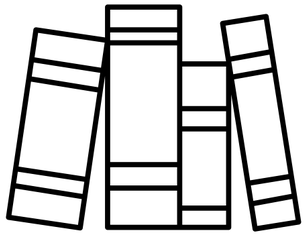




Academic Tutors



Careers Advice



Library

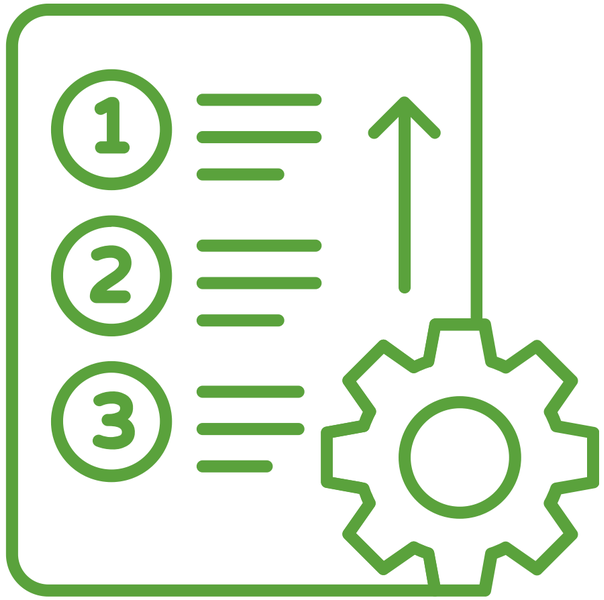


Student Services



SU Helpdesk

How do I decide?



Priorities

- Staying local/ moving away
- What you are studying
- Lifestyle



Advice

- Careers advisor
- Parents/Carers



Research

- UCAS website
- Prospectuses

What next?

- **UCAS** – you can explore courses, learn about what support is available , and lots of how to guides.

- **Prospectuses** – you can find these online for free. **What should you look out for?**



Course Modules



Financial Support



Extra Opportunities

- **Attend open days.** Go see the university for yourself, talk to current students and staff, and visit their accommodation.

Find upcoming open days through: https://www.opendays.com/

Postcard Feedback

- Your feedback is anonymous (no need to write your name) and helps us to develop and improve our sessions.
- If you can’t think of any improvements, please write ‘nothing’ for question one.
- There are no right or wrong answers, please answer honestly about what you think.
- If there are any questions you really don’t want to answer, it is okay to leave it blank.
- If you have any questions, please ask us.

What others have said:

“Today showed me how university can help.”

Find out more

Check out our website, and follow us on social media!



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Any Questions?