

BU

Bournemouth
University

Your future



Live
your
dreams

We're here to help you to make informed decisions about your route into higher education and beyond. This leaflet will help you explore your options.



**Get
scribbling
and dream
big**

Writing something down makes it more real, and helps you structure your life to work towards your goals.

My name is

I aspire to be

**The first thing
I need to do is**

My second step is

Don't forget about

At age 14 your options are:

GCSE



BTEC
(Level 2)



**Key Skills and
Functional
Skills (Level 2)**

At age 16 your options are:



**A
Level**
Apprenticeship
(Intermediate and
Advanced)

**Employment with
training (Level 3)**



BTEC
(Level 3)

At age 18+ your options are:

**University
degree**

Apprenticeship
(Level 4)

**Foundation
degree**

HNC/HND

**Employment
with training**
(Level 4)

You need to think about:

☁ **What subjects you enjoy or are interested in.**

☁ **What you want to study at 16 and 18 – you may need certain GCSEs for your preferred A-levels or degree courses.**

If you're not sure what you want to do, keep your GCSE choices broad.

You need to think about:

☁ **What you want to study at university, or what job you'd like to do after studying.**

☁ **Are there any GCSEs you'd like to resit to improve your chances of getting into university?**

☁ **Does practical work suit you better than academic subjects?**

You need to think about:

☁ **What career you want and what course will get you there.**

☁ **Any other experience that will boost your uni application** (e.g. voluntary work, work experience or other qualifications)

Not sure? Think about what you're passionate about, what courses tie in with this.



www.bournemouth.ac.uk/yourfuture

Why choose higher education?

Getting a degree is just one of many reasons why higher education is a great choice. By studying at university you could:

- **Study a subject you're passionate about** in detail
- **Discover something** completely new
- **Make vital contacts** to help you kickstart your career
- **Gain the skills you'll need** once you start work
- **Earn more**, on average, than those without a degree.



Top tip:

If you really don't think university is right for you, one of your post-16 options is an apprenticeship - learn essential skills and gain recognised qualifications while working and earning a wage.

Make a note of the GCSE, A-level or BTEC subjects you'd like to study:

Choosing

There is a wide range of subjects to choose from at university, from highly vocational courses, to those that are more academic. If you've got a career in mind, such as nursing or engineering, you'll want to choose a vocational course that's focused on preparing you for a specific job.

In many cases, the degree subject is less important than doing the degree itself. If this is the case, choose something you love!

 **Beware:** Look beyond course titles - the units covered can be very different from university to university.

 **Don't forget:** Key Information Sets give you an easy way to compare universities.

 **Keep an eye out for:** Work placement opportunities - they can give you a real head start when you graduate.

 **Top tip:** Attending university Open Days will help you decide if a course is right for you and whether you can see yourself spending the next three or four years of your life there.

List your priorities when looking at universities and courses:



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Applying

To apply to university you need to go through a number of steps with UCAS. You don't need to complete the whole application in one go - you can edit and save it as you go without submitting it.



Register with UCAS - this is just like setting up any other online account.



Spend time on your application - take it one stage at a time so that it's manageable, and leave plenty of time to get through all the information.



Head to www.ucas.com to watch videos for tips on the application process.



Choose up to five courses - you don't need to put them in preference order.



Write your personal statement - think carefully about what to include. University tutors read 100s each year, so make yours stand out for the right reasons and take extra care with your spelling and grammar.



Focus on getting great results - you won't need to do anything once you get your grades, as UCAS automatically passes these on to your chosen universities.



Be aware: The UCAS tariff is changing for courses starting in September 2017. Check www.ucas.com for the latest information.

Student life

University is about personal development as much as gaining a qualification. Studying at university could give you the chance to:

- Meet a wide range of people from around the world
- Try a variety of new activities through the Students' Union and join a club or society
- Travel and learn at the same time with study and work abroad opportunities
- Do a work placement or projects with employers.

"It's all these little bits and pieces that add up to really make your uni experience stand out"

Louis Sherman,
BSc (Hons) Applied Geography



Top tip: Take the opportunity to learn a new language, become a mentor to new students, work on the student radio station, volunteer on local projects, or try a new sport - these are great additions to your CV and fun as well.



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Accommodation

Spending your first year in your university's halls or shared house is a great way to get into the swing of university life and to make new friends. Moving away from home for the first time can be daunting, but you'll all be in the same boat.

"I was nervous to meet my new housemates but once we were open with one another there wasn't anything scary or awkward about it"

Katrina Eastwood,
BA (Hons) Economics

 **Top tip:** Lots of students choose to go to their local university and live at home to save their pennies.



Find out more about BU students' experiences at
www.bournemouth.ac.uk/ug-blog

Dream big

There are no limits to where you can go after university, whether you want to continue your studies with a postgraduate course (a Master's) or jump into the world of work.

Make the most of all of the opportunities that come your way at university, whether that's volunteering with your Students' Union, joining a sports team or doing a placement in industry.

Graduates are in high demand, with over 76% of graduates employed after their studies.*

As well as good employment prospects, the money's not bad either; with average graduate salaries of £20,637 six months after graduation.*

You never know where your studies could take you - there are uni graduates all over the world.

 **Top tip:** Degrees that offer work experience through placements are highly valued by employers.

* **Source:** The Association of Graduate Careers Services AGCAS, What Do Graduates Do? 2015



Money

Rather than worrying about how much university costs, you should view it as an investment in your future. Luckily, the government sees it that way too, so there is help available to ensure you don't have to pay anything up front and can afford it.

You can get a loan to cover your tuition fees, as well as a maintenance loan to help you with living costs. The best part is that you don't have to repay either of these until you're in full-time work, and earning over a specified amount.

Universities also offer bursaries and scholarships, which you don't have to repay. Look at the financial support available with the universities you're considering, and see if you could be eligible for some additional finance.

Special funds are also available for students who need extra help, such as care leavers and those with a disability or learning difference.

And don't forget, you can always get a part-time job to earn some extra cash, and gain useful experience along the way!



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**Top tip:**

Many of us don't have career goals or know what we want to do when we're young - stick with subjects that really interest you if you're not sure and have a great time!

Further information

There's a lot of information about further and higher education for you to consider. Take a look at www.bournemouth.ac.uk/yourfuture to get started.

You can also visit our blog where our current students share top tips and everything you need to know about higher education:

www.bournemouth.ac.uk/ug-blog