

Course choice checklist

When you are looking at what your local colleges and universities have to offer use this checklist to make sure that you've covered everything and help you to narrow your options down.

1. Check the **level** that you want to study at. If you've already got qualifications you can (a) improve an existing qualification, (b) choose another subject at the same level or (c) move up a level.
2. If you're choosing a **level 2 or 3 course**, make sure it is recognized as relevant for the job sector that you're interested in. For example, GCSE Maths and English will be appropriate for all job areas, but most sectors have specialist qualifications – for example, CACHE certificates and diplomas for those interested in working in Care, NVQs for those working in Hospitality.
3. If you're interested in **higher education** (degree level) make sure you understand the full range on offer, including opportunities to study part-time or to build on an Advanced Apprenticeship. Examples are:
 - a. CertHE – first year of a degree course
 - b. DipHE – usually equivalent to the first two years of a degree
 - c. HND – equivalent to the first two years of a degree – check to see if you can top up to a full degree
 - d. Foundation degree – equivalent to the first two years of an honours degree
 - e. Degree – e.g. BA, BSc, Bed, BEng
 - f. Postgraduate – master's level study that is at a higher level than the degrees mentioned above
4. Have a look at the [National Careers](#) website if you're not sure how qualifications fit the careers that you're interested in.
5. Look at **online prospectuses**.
6. **Where are these courses delivered?** How easily can you get there from work or home? (Colleges and universities often have more than one campus so make sure you have checked this.)
7. What will your **travel costs** be?
8. Have you read the course descriptions and checked the **entry requirements** to make sure you have the right qualifications or experience?
9. **When is it taught?** (Few courses require full-time university or college attendance but attendance differs enormously.)
10. **How many hours a week** will you need to put to one side? When will you fit the course in?
11. Will studying affect any **other responsibilities** you have, for example, work or childcare arrangements?
12. **If you're working** speak to your line manager in case you can negotiate flexible working hours or time off for study.
13. What will it **cost**? Check the cost and find out whether there's financial help.
14. Are there any questions you want to ask the course provider(s) before you make your application? Ask to speak to an admissions tutor. Having your **questions** ready will be helpful for both of you.