



Foundation degrees in the South East

What are they?

Foundation degrees are “vocational higher education qualifications” which means that they combine academic study with work place learning. They are designed by academic staff in association with local employers and aim to equip both current and

It usually takes two years full time or three to four years part time to complete a foundation degree. A foundation degree is the equivalent of two thirds of a full honours degree. At the end of a foundation degree one option will be to continue your studies, there are agreed progression pathways where students are guaranteed a place, or an interview, for the final year of an honours degree in a relevant subject.

Who are they for?

The minimum age to begin a foundation degree is 18, the same as an honours degree, but about 75% of students are over 21 when they start and about half of foundation degree students study part time. Foundation degrees are for anybody wanting to study at higher education level with employment in mind. They are particularly appropriate for people who:

- have taken a vocational course (e.g. a diploma or BTEC National) at level 3
- are unemployed and looking for a way into work
- want to progress in their current job
- want to return to work after a break for any reason
- want to change their career
- want to gain a work related qualification for any reason

What can you study?

There is a wide range of subject choice and type of study available. There are over 1,700 Foundation Degrees courses running in the UK, with a further 900 planned.

To search for full details of all the foundation degrees in the South East, organised either by college or under these broad subject headings:

- Agricultural, horticulture, animal care
- Business and management
- Computing
- Construction
- Creative arts and design
- Education and training
- Engineering
- Hair and beauty
- Health and care
- Hospitality and tourism
- Media
- Performing Arts
- Public and emergency services
- Retail
- Science
- Social studies
- Sport and outdoor

go to:

www.foundation-degrees-in-the-southeast.org.uk

If you are free to study anywhere in the UK the UCAS website enables you to search online for all available foundation degree options:

fd.ucas.com/CourseSearch/Default.aspx

How do they work?

Each foundation degree is different; it could include any combination of time spent in college or university, learning in the workplace, learning online or other forms of distance learning. Many offer the option of studying full time or studying part time if you want to carry on earning and get relevant work experience while you learn.

How much will it cost?

The fees for foundation degrees are similar to those for honours degrees and foundation degree students are entitled to the same student financial support as all other higher education students. This support is usually means tested and will vary for full-time and part-time courses. If you're working while studying you could ask your employer to help with the costs.

The Learning Opportunities website has a section dedicated to information on where to get help towards fees and other costs related to your course:

www.learning-opportunities.org.uk/financial-help-for-study

What are the entry requirements?

There are no set entry requirements for foundation degrees. Students can gain entry to foundation degrees with level 3 qualifications such as A Levels, BTEC Nationals, level 3 diplomas and NVQs. Mature students may also be accepted without formal academic qualifications as all foundation degrees take into account relevant work experience which is generally investigated on an individual basis.

What next?

Students can progress from a foundation degree to

- relevant work
- further professional qualifications
- the final year of a specified honours degree - the conversion may require more than one year of study if the two courses have very different content

How do you apply?

For part-time courses you apply directly to the institution offering the course.

Most full time courses ask you to apply through UCAS in the same way as for an honours degree. The UCAS website enables you to apply on line at:

fd.ucas.com/CourseSearch/Default.aspx

Other useful websites

The government information website:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/DG_10039022