

CHOOSING A COURSE & UNIVERSITY

There's no right or wrong order to choose your degree and your university. It's a big decision so it's important to consider what your personal priorities are. There are over 30,000 courses available to apply to at over 280 UK universities via UCAS. You'll usually be studying your degree for a minimum of 3 years so it is important that you make an informed choice, and end up on a course you have genuine interest in, at a university where you'll be happy.

There are lots of ways to choose both the right course and university for you.

Choosing a course:

Subject

- What are you currently studying?
- What subjects do you really enjoy? Is there anything new you want to explore?
- Are you considering a joint honours degree, allowing you to study more than one subject at once?
- Research what is taught on the degree, the same subject can differ from university to university
- University course pages are a great place to start

Styles of teaching

- Consider which style of teaching and learning you are most suited to
- Different courses are taught and assessed in different ways at university, you can research how degrees are delivered on university webpages
- Don't forget to look for tutor-led learning, lab time, presentations, group work, independent projects and timetabled lectures

Careers

- Your career aspirations may determine the degree you will study at university.
- Some professions require a certain degree. What degree is that?
- Research your dream job by speaking to staff at school and university, or visiting websites like prospects.ac.uk
- Engage in conversations on open days and taster lectures.
- You can help to boost your employability after graduating by taking advantage of opportunities offered as part of your degree, such as studying abroad or an industrial placement
- At the University of Sheffield it's possible to study abroad or undertake an industrial placement on 95% of our courses

Entry requirements

- Three A Levels (or equivalent qualifications) are typically expected, be sure to check course web pages for specific requirements
- Entrance requirements will be different from university to university and from course to course
- Some degrees will require you to be studying certain subjects, some won't
- At the University of Sheffield many of our academic departments may use contextual admissions to make a reduced offer to applicants taking an EPQ in a subject area relevant to the chosen degree course and is completed alongside three A Levels
- Usually there will be widening participation and access schemes which will include a contextual offer for eligible students

Foundation degrees

- Usually have lower entry requirements
- Offer an alternative route to your desired degree if you don't have the right combination of subjects or grades
- It is an additional year at university, to build confidence, academic skills, and subject knowledge before progressing to a standard degree

Extra opportunities

- Consider if you would like to study abroad for a year, have the option of a placement year to gain work experience, or go on an exciting field trip!
 - Many university courses will offer these opportunities, and if you are looking for these experiences, this may help guide your decision making process
-

Choosing a university:

League tables

- You may find league tables such as The Times HE rankings and Guardian League tables useful for comparing universities. Different league tables bring together data on a number of different areas relating to student experience, but they are all a little bit different and use different metrics
- Don't forget to check subject rankings as well as overall university rankings, and consider which university is right for you
- Check out the graduate employability data which can demonstrate how employable graduates from different universities and courses are

Location

- There are benefits to both moving away from home to go to university or staying close by, think about which you'd prefer

- Look at the university accommodation and options including cost, facilities and, whether you're guaranteed accommodation
- You are guaranteed accommodation if you choose The University of Sheffield as your firm choice, you join us through Clearing, or you have chosen the University as your insurance choice
- City or campus? A city university has all its facilities around the city. A campus university has all its facilities based closely together
- The University of Sheffield has the benefit of being a campus close to the city centre, we like to call it a 'city campus'!

Student experience

- University is more than just gaining a degree
- Explore the student support available, universities offer a wide range from study skills, wellbeing, to disability and mentoring
- If you have a keen interest in a sport or hobby, or want to try something new - check out the clubs and societies offered by university students' unions
- Find out what's on offer in the city or surrounding area in which the university is based.
- Consider the cost of living in the Universities you are looking at. Make sure you think about your budget in advance

Open days

- All universities hold open days and campus tours throughout the year. These are great opportunities to see and experience university environments yourself as well as attend in-person subject talks to get better insight into the course you're considering applying for

You can apply to 5 courses through UCAS, use your choices wisely. Don't be afraid to make aspirational choices, where the entrance requirements may be a grade or two above your predictions, but balance this by also applying to courses with entrance requirements that are closer to your predicted grades.