



GATEWAYS HIGHER EDUCATION JARGON BUSTER

Student Life:

Higher education (HE) – Higher education is the continuation of study after finishing Level 3 qualifications such as A-levels and BTECs. Most people study at higher education institutions straight after sixth form or college, but there is no age limit.

Higher Education institution (HEI) – Organisations that provide higher education. HEIs are where you go study higher education courses and gain higher education qualifications. Examples of HEIs are universities, colleges, and specialist institutions such as art school or agricultural colleges.

University – A specific type higher education institution where people go to continue studying. Universities have thousands of students of all ages, from all different nationalities, religions, and class.

Degree – A qualification that people study for at higher education level. People who do a degree will specialise in a subject area.

Course – The subject that a student studies. Each course usually lasts between 3 and 4 years. Some courses are longer such as Medicine, Dentistry and Architecture.

Lecture – A method of teaching at university. Large classes where a lecturer talks at the front whilst students take notes. Can last up to 2 hours and have more than 300 people in attendance, depending on the course!

Seminar – Small group teaching that involves discussion with other students about your subject, led by teaching staff. These are more like classes at school.

Campus – The grounds of a university. A campus map would show all of the buildings that are part of the university, such as lecture theatres, shops, and halls of residence.

Halls of residence – A block of accommodation where students live together for their first year. This means that students can go to university far away from their home.

Students' Union (SU) – An organisation found in all universities that is run by students to represent student views. At the SU, they offer support, run societies and hold social events for all students to enjoy.



Level 3 Qualifications:

A-level – An academic qualification in a specific subject that’s studied full-time over two years. Students often choose three or more subjects, and are mainly assessed through written exams. A-levels are accepted by all universities and apprenticeship providers.

BTECs & other diplomas – A specialist work-related (vocational) qualification that can be studied full-time over two years. These qualifications often suit people who learn by ‘doing’ since they combine practical learning with subject and theory content. They are assessed by a combination of coursework and exams. Not all universities accept BTECs; you may be expected to take one or more A-levels alongside a BTEC.

T-level – A new technical programme for 16-19 year olds. It’s a more rigorous qualification, designed for students who want to specialise in a specific industry or prepare for a particular job. As opposed to apprentices who spend most of their time learning on the job, a T-level student will spend most of their time in the classroom learning technical skills.

Advanced Apprenticeship – Advanced apprenticeships are generally considered equivalent to 2 A-level passes. Apprentices work towards a qualification in a sixth form/FE college while also working for roughly 30 hours a week in paid employment. Entry requirements vary but you generally need at least five GCSEs with grades 9-4.

Applying to Uni:

UCAS – UCAS stands for ‘Universities and Colleges Admissions Service’. It is the organisation that manages applications to higher education courses in the UK. In the final year of college/sixth form, students who are applying to study an undergraduate degree at universities or colleges will fill out a UCAS form online where they provide information about themselves, and apply for up to five higher education courses.

Personal statement – A personal statement supports an application to study at a university or college. It’s your chance to tell admissions staff why you’d like to study a particular course or subject, and what skills and experience you have that show your passion for your chosen field.

Prospectus – These are guides produced by universities that detail all of the courses that a university offers. It gives information such as entry requirements, course structure and extra support offered.



Finance:

Income – Money earned as wages or received from other sources.

Expenditure – Money spent on items, services, or bills.

Loans – This is money you borrow from people, banks, and other lenders. Student loans are provided by the government.

Bills – This is how you pay back money you owe for goods or services – sometimes you have to pay it all, sometimes you can pay a bit back every month.

Taxes and National Insurance – This is the money you pay to the government that goes towards the cost public services. The more you earn, the more you pay – normally as a % of your monthly income.

Interest – When you borrow money, the lender will often ask you pay back a bit more than what you borrowed. This is called interest.

Disposable income – The money you have left over to spend on anything you like, once you've paid all your bills.

Student Finance:

Student Finance England (SFE) – A government organisation that provides financial assistance in the form of loans to pay your tuition fees and living costs whilst at university.

Tuition fees – Tuition fees cover the cost of your study. This is paid to your university directly by SFE and must be paid back once you are earning over a certain amount.

Maintenance loan – This is money that is paid to you to cover your living costs whilst at university. They work out how much money to loan you based on your family income. This must be paid back but only once you are earning over a certain amount.

Bursary – This is extra financial help provided by a higher education institution for students from households with lower incomes. It does not have to be paid back.