

Glossary

Access course

A course aimed at mature students (19 +) who do not yet meet the requirements to study at degree level. The Access to HE Diploma is widely recognised by UK universities.

Accelerated degree

Refers to the growing opportunity to gain a degree by two years (rather than the usual three years) of study.

Acceptance rates

The proportion of applicants who have a place at the end of the cycle is termed the acceptance rate.

Baccalaureate

An internationally-recognised examination primarily intended to qualify successful candidates for higher education.

Bachelor's degree

The most common higher education qualification in the UK. It is a three or four-year course, where graduates may obtain a BA (Bachelor of arts), BSc (Bachelor of science), BEd (Bachelor of education) or BEng (Bachelor of engineering), depending on their subject of study.

BTEC

The best-known provider of vocational qualifications in the UK. They combine practical learning with subject and theory content.

Degree classifications

First-class honours, second-class honours (upper or lower), third-class honours (plus a pass or ordinary degree award with no honours status).

Foundation degree

This qualification is the equivalent of two-thirds of a full honours degree, and often allows students the option of studying part-time or full-time.

Higher education

This term refers to the optional final stage of formal education that occurs after secondary education. Traditionally associated with universities, over 150,000 students now study higher education in a college.

Higher education provider

This term refers to the universities and colleges which provide higher education courses which are validated or accredited, and teaching and learning is quality assured for undergraduate-level programmes leading to an award at Cert HE, Dip HE, HNC, HND, foundation degree or first degree standard and resulting in an award.

Higher National Diploma (HND)

A two-year course which, depending on grades, can lead to the third year of a degree.

Honours degree

Most commonly it is an award in connection with an undergraduate bachelor's degree (see degree classifications).

Oxbridge

A term used to refer to the universities, or graduates, of Oxford and Cambridge.

Russell Group

An association of 24 research-intensive universities with a shared reputation for academic prestige.

Sandwich course

A degree course that includes a placement (usually for a year) in industry.

UCAS

An independent charity providing information, advice, and admissions services to inspire and facilitate educational progression.

Undergraduate

A person studying in a university or college for a first degree (sometimes shortened to undergrad).

Vocational

For courses, generally refers to content concerned with the skills needed for an occupation, trade or profession.