

BHASVIC

Foundation Years

A Foundation Year is designed for students who have the ability to study for a degree but don't have the required qualifications to enter directly onto an honours degree.

It therefore attracts many students from non-traditional educational backgrounds and under-represented groups.

Once you have passed the Foundation Year you can apply to progress onto Year 1 of appropriate linked honours undergraduate degree.

A number of universities now offer these additional years to students in order to allow them to overcome barriers, potentially change direction or to take the additional time they need to reach the required standards.

If you would like to do further research on the available foundation year courses, use this link <https://digital.ucas.com/search> and search for your subject of interest with foundation year e.g. 'Business with Foundation Year'

Pros to consider

- Allows students access to higher tariff universities
- Allows students to change their academic pathway e.g. science based to humanities
- Allows students time to improve their study skills/ make transition to university
- Allows students who have had significant barriers to education an opportunity to progress
- The content of a Foundation Year may be quite broad, e.g. Social Sciences rather than Sociology; this allows the student to explore alternatives before committing to a degree programme.

Cons to consider

- Extra year of fees and maintenance costs – students should consider a 3rd year of free level 3 education or some other route if this cost is prohibitive.
- Foundation years are not available at all universities or for all subject areas so the student will be more limited in their choices.
- An extra year of study is involved, unless the student needs to do a 3rd year in FE anyway.
- If the students do not manage to complete the Foundation Year successfully then they will have incurred debt but not achieved any qualifications

Alternatives

- **3rd year free education (1 year)** at another Further Education College – gain extra qualifications to top up points – see FE colleges document in the same place as this guide.
- **Reapply with achieved grades** – some universities may allow some flexibility/you may be successful on a competitive course next year but you would need to check whether this is the case or not with the university admissions contact
- **Resits** – this option needs to be considered carefully whether it will improve the current situation and to see if this is a possibility for your courses. Costs are involved and you would need to review this with teachers and complete form with exams department.
- **Foundation Degree** – 2 years of an undergraduate degree course equivalent and then possibly an opportunity to top this up to a full undergraduate degree but not offered everywhere. (A foundation

year is different to a foundation degree, a foundation degree is 2 years long, can be funded through student finance but is a more vocational qualification, for more information see <http://fd.ucas.com/FoundationDegree/About.aspx>)

- **Access courses** – costs involved if you already hold a level 3 qualification, this is usually only available to students over the age of 19 but it is worth checking with local providers to see if they are able to offer any flexibility. East Sussex College does sometimes accept 18 year olds East Sussex College Group (Lewes and Eastbourne) <https://www.escg.ac.uk/study/access-to-he/> GBMET (usually 19 but worth enquiring for 18 year olds) <https://www.gbmc.ac.uk/courses-for-adults/access-to-he-courses>
- **Mature students** – may be allowed in with lower grades if they have relevant experience e.g. from the workplace. Mature students are usually aged 21 and over.
- **Degree apprenticeships** <https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships/apprenticeships-england/what-apprenticeships-are-available/degree-apprenticeships>
- **Open University** <http://www.open.ac.uk/>

If you have any questions or would like to get some advice on weighing up your options, please email careers@bhasvic.ac.uk and ask to speak with a Careers Adviser.