

Intro to Higher Education

Hartlepool College



Housekeeping



Things to remember...

Fire Alarm Drill

The fire alarm is tested every Monday at 11:00am

In the event of a Fire Alarm

- Please vacate the building immediately
- Leave via your nearest fire exit
- Follow staff instructions and proceed to the designated assembly point
- Do not use the lifts
- Do not re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so

Aims of today



- To look at the benefits of studying a higher education course
- Explore options available and support provided on the UCAS website
- To learn about the application process
- Gain an understanding of student finance and the support available
- Support informed progression decisions

Why do people go to university ???

University isn't just about learning!

- Increase your knowledge, study what you love, learning from top experts in their field.
- Get your first taste of independence, gain confidence, meet new people and broaden your horizons.
- Gain internationally recognised qualifications.
- Gain essential skills needed in your future career.
- Increase your earning potential: On average, graduates earn significantly more than non-graduates over their working lives.

Where do we look?



www.UCAS.com

The UCAS website is for anyone looking for a full-time course.

UCAS Hub provides support throughout your progression journey, including guidance on personal statements, student finance (SFE), apprenticeships, and higher education applications.

It also offers career exploration tools, including a careers quiz to help you identify courses, universities, apprenticeships, and career pathways that match your interests and strengths.

UCAS

What types of degrees are there?



Title	Level	Length of time (based on full time)
HNC – Higher National Certificate	4	1 year full time
HND – Higher National Diploma	4 & 5	2 years full time
Foundation Degree	5	2 years full time
Degree with honours (eg BSc, BEng or BA Hons)	6	3 years full time
Degree with Foundation Year	6	4 years full time
Degree with year in industry/sandwich	6	4 years full time
Master's Degree (eg Master of Engineering MEng)	7	4 years full time 5 with year in industry
PHD – Doctorate	8	3-4 years after a Masters

Choose from over 50,000 courses across the UK

What you need to know about your application!

The buzzword is: **HCFE2027**

- It costs **£34.50** to submit your UCAS application, however, UCAS application fees may be waived for eligible students who have received free school meals at any point in the last six years.
- Write one application / one personal statement
- Make up to 5 choices
- You can start your application as early as May, ready to submit from September
- The college's deadline for all applications to be completed and submitted is:

Friday 27 November 2026

Writing your personal statement



Free university taster sessions



Not sure about your progression route?

You can now try before you apply!

UCAS and Springpod offer online subject tasters to help students explore careers and higher education options.

To explore these opportunities, interested applicants can register via the link below.

<https://www.ucas.com/explore/search/spotlights>

Money Matters



Student Finance England

Universities can charge tuition fees of up to £9,790 per year for full time undergraduate courses. £7,335 for part time courses.

- Eligible students can apply for a Tuition Fee
- Maintenance Loans are available to help with living costs – the amount you receive depends on factors such as household income and where you live while studying.
- For students living at home, the Maintenance Loan can range from:
£4,013 (£77 per week) - £9,118 (£175 per week)
- Additional support is available for students with disabilities or learning difficulties through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Students with children may be eligible for Childcare Grant and other forms of support – these grants do not need to be repaid
- Many universities offer bursaries and scholarships – these do not have to be paid back.

Student Finance Explained



STUDENT FINANCE EXPLAINED

2026 TO 2027



Approx. figures for Maintenance Loans 2026/27

Maintenance Loans in England 2026/27			
Household Income	Living at home	Away from home (outside London)	Away from home (London)
£25,000	£9,118	£10,830	£14,135
£30,000	£7,764	£9,297	£12,253
£35,000	£6,410	£7,763	£10,371
£40,000	£5,057	£6,230	£8,490
£43,854	£4,013	£5,048	£7,039
£50,000	£4,013	£5,048	£7,039

www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator

NHS Learner Support Fund (LSF)



Eligible healthcare students can receive additional NHS funding alongside their Student Finance England support, including a £5,000 annual training grant that *does not need to be repaid*.

This funding will be provided on top of existing support, including student loans for students studying the following courses:

- Dental therapy or dental hygiene (level 5 and 6 courses)
- Dietetics
- Midwifery
- Nursing (adult, child, mental health, learning disability, joint nursing, and social work)
- Occupational therapy
- Operating department practitioner (level 5 and 6 courses)
- Orthotics and prosthetics
- Orthoptics
- Paramedics (DipHE and FD courses are not eligible for NHS LSF)
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry or chiropody
- Radiography (diagnostic and therapeutic)
- Speech and language therapy

LSF – additional funding



Extra payments will be available for eligible students. Each year you could receive:

- Parental support of £2,000, if you have at least one dependent child under 15 years, or under 17 years if registered with special educational needs
- £1000 if studying in a region that is struggling to recruit
- £1000 if you're a new student studying a shortage specialism important to delivering the NHS Long Term Plan

Specialist Subjects

Mental Health Nursing
Learning Disability Nursing
Diagnostic Radiography
Prosthetics and Orthotics
Orthoptics
Podiatry

How much do students repay



The repayment threshold is £25,000 and repayments are 9% of earnings above £25,000

Salary	Annual Repayment	Monthly Repayment
£25,000 or less	£0	£0
£30,000	£450	£37.50
£35,000	£900	£75.00
£40,000	£1,350	£112.50

Repayments are automatically deducted through PAYE. If you don't pay back your loan after 40 years it will automatically be scrapped!

What have you learned today ...



Reflection

- Knowing where to find information about universities and courses
- Understanding the basics of the UCAS application process
- Understanding what financial support may be available
- Feeling more confident about exploring higher education options

Questions?

Hartlepool College

