



**Next Steps
South West**

What is HE?

HE - Higher Education is degree level study, after compulsory education. It covers a wide range of courses, and you can study at universities, colleges, or other learning providers. It also includes work-based learning.



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Higher National Certificate/Diploma (HNC/HND) - These are vocational courses, usually provided by further or higher education colleges. An HNC takes one year (full time), and is the equivalent of the first year of a degree. An HND is the next step, and takes two years (full time), it is the equivalent of the second year of a degree.

Certificate/Diploma of Higher Education (CertHE/DipHE) - These are academic qualifications, a CertHE takes one year, and is the equivalent of the first year of a degree or an HNC. A DipHE is equal to two years or an HND. They can be awarded if you leave a degree course early, or taken as standalone qualifications.

Foundation Degree (FdA) - An FdA is a vocational course combining practical work-based learning with academic study. FdAs usually take two years, after that time you can 'top-up' your studies to achieve a full degree.

Top-up Degree - These are available after completing an FdA/HND/DipHE or equivalent Level 5 qualification. A top-up course usually takes a year, and allows you to upgrade your qualification to a full degree.

Degree - A 'Bachelors degree' is the broad term given to a full undergraduate degree, there are different titles depending on the course e.g. Bachelor of Arts (BA Hons) and Bachelor of Science (BSc Hons). A standard degree usually takes three years, but some courses will have the option of a placement year, which will extend the duration of the course.

There are four year courses that integrate masters level study with a degree, the qualifications received are known as MA Hons/MSci Hons (or other subject specific titles). These courses are for those interested in technical or research based careers.

Higher/Degree Level Apprenticeships - Apprenticeships are work-based qualifications, combining on-the-job training with classroom study. You can study both Higher and Degree Apprenticeships from Level: 4 - 7.

For more information about these, and other HE courses visit our website, where you can see an interactive qualification chart



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