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Guide to Going to University in the UK

Choosing the right university is an important decision that can greatly impact your academic and personal growth. Here is a guide to help you navigate the process of going to university in the UK, including information on suitability, pass and fail rates, costs, and funding.

This guide will cover

- Would university suit you?
- Costs and Funding
- Finding the Right University
- What to look for when researching the University
- International Students
- What happens if I don't get the grades I was predicted to get?
- How can we help

University Would Suit You If you are/have

Curiosity A strong desire to learn, explore new ideas, and delve into various subjects can enhance your university experience.

Open-mindedness Being open to different perspectives, cultures, and ideas will help you adapt to a diverse academic and social environment.

Self-motivation University education often requires independent study and self-directed learning. Being able to motivate yourself and manage your time effectively is crucial.

Resilience University can be challenging, both academically and personally. The ability to bounce back from setbacks and adapt to new situations is valuable.

Critical thinking: Developing strong analytical and problem-solving skills will aid you in coursework, research, and engaging with complex concepts.

Communication skills Effective communication, both written and verbal, is important for presenting ideas, participating in group work, and engaging with professors and peers.

Self-discipline University life offers numerous distractions, so having the discipline to balance your studies, social life, and other commitments is essential.



University Would Not Suit You If:

Individuals who prefer a highly structured and guided learning environment may struggle with the more independent and self-directed nature of university education. Universities often require students to take responsibility for their own learning and to manage their time and workload effectively.

Students who struggle with large group settings or have social anxiety may find the large class sizes and extensive social interactions in university overwhelming. The university environment often involves participating in class discussions, group projects, and social activities, which can be challenging for those who prefer smaller, more intimate settings.

Individuals who have difficulty adapting to change or are resistant to new ideas and perspectives may struggle in a university setting. Universities are dynamic environments that encourage exploration, critical thinking, and exposure to diverse viewpoints. Those who are not open to new experiences or resist stepping out of their comfort zones may find it challenging to fully engage with their studies.

Students who have a strong aversion to academic pursuits and prefer hands-on, practical training may find university education less suitable. Universities generally focus on theoretical knowledge and research-based learning, which may not align with the vocational or trade-oriented interests of some individuals.

Individuals who have limited self-motivation or struggle with time management may face difficulties in meeting the academic demands of university. University education often requires self-discipline, long-term planning, and consistent effort. Those who struggle with self-motivation or have poor time management skills may find it challenging to keep up with coursework, assignments, and deadlines.

Costs and Funding

Undergraduate degrees The average tuition fees for undergraduate courses in the UK range from around £9,250 to £9,500 per year for UK and EU students. Some courses, particularly those in subjects such as medicine or laboratory-based sciences, may have higher fees.

Postgraduate degrees Postgraduate tuition fees vary more widely depending on the program and the university. On average, UK and EU students can expect to pay between £6,000 and £12,000 per year for a master's degree. Research-based degrees, such as Ph.D. programs, may have different fee structures.

Remember to conduct thorough research and visit university websites for up-to-date information on entry requirements, specific courses, and admission deadlines. Utilise the resources on our helpful links page.

Accommodation The cost of accommodation can vary significantly depending on whether you live in university halls of residence or private rented accommodation. On-campus accommodation may include utilities (water, electricity, heating), while private rentals often require additional payments for bills and internet access. Prices can range from around £4,000 to £12,000 or more per year, depending on the location and type of accommodation.

Books and Study Materials Course-specific books, textbooks, and study materials can be an additional expense. The costs will depend on your subject area and the reading requirements of your course. It is advisable to budget around £200 to £500 per academic year for these materials.

Food and Groceries The cost of food can vary depending on your eating habits and whether you choose to cook at home or eat out. On average, students spend approximately £30 to £70 per week on groceries and meals. You adapt and learn to live on a budget at University depending on your financial circumstances.

Transportation If you need to commute to campus, consider the cost of transportation. Prices will depend on the distance and the mode of transport (e.g., bus, train, or bicycle). Some universities offer discounted or free bus passes for students, so it's worth exploring these options.

Personal Expenses Personal expenses include items such as clothing, toiletries, mobile phone bills, and entertainment. It's important to budget for these expenses, which can vary depending on individual preferences and lifestyle choices.

Social Activities and Clubs Participating in social activities, clubs, and societies can enrich your university experience but may involve additional costs such as membership fees, equipment, or event tickets. The amount you spend on social activities will depend on your interests and level of involvement.

Insurance It is advisable to have insurance coverage for your personal belongings, such as laptops, mobile phones, and other valuable items. Some universities may offer insurance packages for students, or you can explore private insurance options.

International Students

Undergraduate degrees: International students generally face higher tuition fees compared to UK and EU students. The average undergraduate tuition fees for international students range from around £10,000 to £38,000 or more per year, depending on the university and the course.

Postgraduate degrees: International postgraduate students can expect to pay higher fees compared to UK and EU students. Average fees for international postgraduate courses vary significantly, ranging from approximately £10,000 to £45,000 per year or more for certain specialised programs.

What happens if I don't get the grades I was predicted to get?

When you don't achieve the grades you expected at college or university and need to navigate through the clearing process or consider your first and second choice options, it's important to keep a few key points in mind both emotionally and practically

Emotional Considerations

- Remember that grades do not define your worth or potential. Your academic performance is just one aspect of your abilities and strengths.
- Stay positive and maintain a growth mindset. View this as an opportunity for personal growth, resilience, and learning from setbacks.
- Reach out to your support network, such as family, friends, or teachers, who can provide encouragement, guidance, and a listening ear during this time.
- Allow yourself to feel disappointed or upset, but also remind yourself that there are alternative pathways and options available to achieve your goals.

Practical Steps

- Take the time to thoroughly research and understand the clearing process, which allows you to explore available university courses that still have vacancies. The UCAS website and university clearing hotlines can provide valuable information.
- Contact universities directly to discuss your situation. Be prepared to explain your circumstances, highlight relevant achievements, and express your passion for the subject you wish to study.
- Consider widening your options and exploring alternative universities or courses that align with your interests and career aspirations. Flexibility can open up new opportunities.
- Utilise resources such as online forums, social media groups, and university open days to gather more information about the universities and courses you are interested in. This can help you make informed decisions during the clearing process.
- Stay organised and be proactive. Keep track of important dates, deadlines, and correspondence with universities. Prepare any necessary documents or additional information that may be required during the application process.

Remember, the clearing process and reconsideration of university choices can still lead to a fulfilling and successful university experience. Stay resilient, remain open to new possibilities, and trust that there are multiple paths to achieving your academic and career goals.

Attending university offers several benefits when it comes to obtaining a job. Firstly, many employers value the critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that are developed through university education.

The in-depth knowledge and specialised training acquired in a specific field can make graduates more competitive in the job market. Additionally, the university provides opportunities for networking, internships, and practical experiences that can enhance employability.

Many professions also require a degree as a minimum qualification, making university education essential for entry into certain career paths.

Lastly, university offers a broader education, fostering personal growth, cultural awareness, and the development of transferable skills such as communication and teamwork. These attributes not only contribute to professional success but also provide a well-rounded foundation for lifelong learning and personal fulfillment. In summary, while there are various pathways to a successful career, attending university can significantly enhance job prospects and offer a range of advantages that extend beyond immediate employment.

Our experts here at GVW went to university and some went through Clearing. If you need some support, go to our useful links and seek help.

If you would like to pay for some personal mentoring with experts that have been through it contact Heather today.

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