

Access to HE Diploma (Social Science)

Course Overview

Access to higher education courses are designed to give mature, motivated, and academically-focused adult students an opportunity to return to study and apply for higher education university courses. Access courses are very demanding but very rewarding; you will need lots of commitment and a positive attitude to learning new skills and gaining knowledge. The course has a strong tutorial system and you will receive full guidance and support for your university and career plans. Your personal tutor will help you manage your learning effectively and provide friendly, confidential support through any problems you may have during your time at College.

Access courses are fully validated by the QAA and are accepted as a standard entry requirement (equivalent to 3 A levels) for the vast majority of British universities, but we always advise you to check specific entry requirements with your chosen university.

What you will learn

You will study a range of level 3 topics, dependent on your university progression plans, taken from sociology and psychology. All students will develop their study skills in preparation for university and these are also core units in the programme and embedded within the course topics.

In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to take an additional GCSE alongside the Access course if this is needed for progression onto particular university courses. It is expected that you will undertake up to 15 hours of self-study each week to support your classroom-based subjects.

Entry Requirements

Applicants should be aged 19 plus by no later than the 31 August prior to starting the course. You will need to have GCSEs at grade C or above (grade 4), in English and maths, depending on the degree course you wish to apply for. One reference from your previous place of study or work will also be required.

In order for you to progress onto an undergraduate degree at a British university, it is essential to have achieved a minimum of a GCSE grade C (4) in maths and English. It is your responsibility to check the GCSE grade profiles of the universities that you are interested in applying to and to attend a number of university open days.

Course Fees

You will need to supply your own stationery and will be advised about certain texts/books which may be integral to your course.

There is a fee for your UCAS application.

There are no course fees if you are under 24 on 31st August of the year in which you start the course AND you do not possess a full Level 3 qualification.

If (a) you are under 24 and already have a full level 3 qualification, OR (b) you are over 24 (irrespective of any qualifications you have achieved), then course fees are applicable. However, you may be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan to cover these.

Course Progression

Students progress onto a range of university degree courses, both locally and nationally. Examples include: social work, youth work, counselling, criminology, psychology, sociology and social policy, politics, law and criminal justice, cognitive neuroscience and education studies.

Access diplomas enable adult students to study for a wide range of degree courses and, subsequently, a range of professional careers. We have a high success rate for our students gaining entry to university and strong links to local and regional universities, who offer our groups a range of taster days and training to support their UCAS choices and applications.

What Happens Next

Apply online via the College website. You will need details of your qualifications and employment history, a reference, and a personal statement which outlines your preferred area of study to complete your application. Once your application has been successfully processed, you will be invited to an interview at the College to meet your tutors, learn more about your chosen course of study and tour the facilities. You will then be offered a place on the programme; you need to confirm your acceptance of the course offered to you as soon as possible as places fill up very quickly.

Course Details

Course Code	P00009
Start Date	07/09/2026
Study Hours	Full Time
Duration	1 year
Campus	Abbey Park Campus
Level	3

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