

Making university choices

Discover
Brunel

The basics

When thinking about university, choosing the right course for you is one of the most important decisions you will make. You will spend three (or more) years studying your subject, so make sure you choose a course you'll enjoy. Here are a few pointers to get you started.

Why do I want to go to university and what can I study?

People have different reasons for going to university and some may influence your course choice. Certain careers will require you to study a specific subject i.e. law, medicine, engineering. Whereas others will focus on the skills you have gained.

You may want to study a subject that you enjoy already or try something completely new.

Degrees can be accredited by professional bodies or organisations i.e. psychology, engineering, teaching, computer science, so do your research and think about what will help you on your career path.

How can I study?

There are different types of degrees and these include:

- Foundation (1 year) followed by an undergraduate degree
- Undergraduate (3-4 years)
- Postgraduate (1-2 years)

Some degrees include **work placements** so you gain experience and a chance to enhance your workplace skills. Brunel is well-known for these degrees.

You may also spend time studying or working aboard – a great way to travel, try out a new language and culture, and meet new people.

Where can I study?

Some people choose to stay at home and study at a local university, while others want to move further away. If you decide to move away from home, take a look at what accommodation is available. Does the university have halls of residence and are there any guarantees around getting a place or is there help to find accommodation in the local area? At Brunel we guarantee all first year students a place to live on campus.

Would you prefer a campus or city university? A campus university will mean everything is on one site, whereas a city university will have buildings in different locations.

Top tips

Do your research:

There are over 50,000 courses on offer in the UK so give yourself time to research – especially new courses you haven't studied before.

[Ucas.com](https://www.ucas.com) is a great place to start.

Speak to your teachers and careers advisors either in person, by email or arrange a video call.

Follow universities on social media channels and look at their websites.

Most importantly, visit universities – either in person or virtually online. There are normally sessions for your parents/carers to join too.

Entry requirements:

It's never too early to check the entry requirements for courses you might be interested in. As well as grade requirements, check if there are any specific subjects you need to have studied already.



Location:

How far is the uni from home and how long will it take you to travel?

If you will be travelling by public transport, what are the costs?

Check out the local town or city for the universities you like – can you see yourself there?

How to apply

Most students apply through UCAS and you can select up to five courses. Use the boxes below to note down some initial thoughts.

Your course:

What subjects do you enjoy and what is it that you enjoy about them?

What are you good at? Think about particular skills you have, these might help guide your subject choice.

If you have a career in mind, do you need to study a specific course and, if so, what?

How do you like to learn? Do you thrive under pressure and enjoy the challenge of exams or do you prefer being able to spend time on a piece of coursework?

Teaching and assessment:

How is the course taught and assessed? You know how you learn best so keep this in mind when looking at courses i.e. is there group work? What percentage is exam assessment? Are there practical assessments like a design project or group performance?

Finally, does the course and university feel right for you – many students say this helps make their final decision.

Your university:

What are the pros and cons of moving away or living at home? List them here.

What is important to you - facilities, location, clubs and societies, Students' Union?

What questions do you want to ask when you visit – either in person or virtually? Make a note of them here.