

# Higher Education Handbook

## Choosing your course



You have an idea of the field that you want to work in, but still need to think about suitable course. You can opt to study for a course that is directly related to a specific profession (Medicine, Engineering, Social Work etc) or choose a programme that still keeps your career options open (Law, Business, Sociology, Biomedicine, etc).

How do you identify and evaluate the suitability of a course that will suit you? Research is critical to finding the right programme that will lead to a successful career. Students often decide on the university before considering the programme - it should be the other way round: find the course that suits you and then evaluate the university. Find out what 'makes up the degree'.

Some of the key factors to consider:

- **Modules:** this is what you will be studying. This should be the critical decision maker. A course with the same title amongst various universities will have very different subjects and will have different emphasis - ensure that the modules being offered interest you and the type of learning match your study style (assignments, examinations, field trips etc)
- Look at student satisfaction, comments by other students etc
- Obvious - entry requirements. Also consider English language and specific subject requirement
- Accreditation of the degree - this is recognition by a professional body of the relevant profession. For certain courses you need this, for example a psychology degree that does not have the accreditation from a psychology body will not allow you to register as a psychologist. For certain professions, a professionally accredited degree gives you added advantage, for example a degree in Human Resources Management that is recognised by CIPD gives you additional kudos.
- Study destination: where would you like to study? Have you done enough research about key differences in how the courses are offered in different countries and even within UK between England and Scotland? How would you

personally benefit from the format in one country over another, for example Scotland and Australia offers a wider base of modules to select from, or a four year engineering degree is required to follow the Washington Accord. You also might need to think about work placements, post study work opportunities etc

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