

Higher Education as a Mature Student



A partnership of
Sheffield Hallam University
and The University of Sheffield

It's never too late to go into higher education!

If you want to make a change in your life, progress your career or just love the challenge of learning something new, then higher education could be for you.

There are many benefits to going into higher education, including developing your skills and knowledge in a subject you are passionate about, changing or enhancing your career, increasing your self-confidence and becoming a role model for your family or community.

You will also develop important transferable skills that can give you a boost in the job market including planning, research, communication, writing, analysis and presenting.



“The biggest obstacle I’ve faced would be the time gap I had from leaving education to coming back. I overcame it by getting help from the tutors in college and adjusting myself accordingly - there is so much help available.”

Shahid, Health Science Access to Higher Education course at Hillsborough College

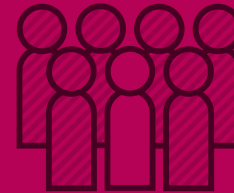
“I’ve achieved so much more than just a degree. When I first came to university, I was shy and unsure of myself, but I’ve really come out of my shell and my confidence has grown massively.”

Emma, First-class degree in History and currently studying a Master's in Historical Research



“What I’ve really enjoyed about coming back to education is studying a subject I’m passionate about.”

Lee, studying a Master's degree in Research in Modern History



Will I meet other mature students?

You're likely to find yourself working alongside students of all ages. There are lots of ways to meet other mature students: on your course, through societies or mature student forums, etc.



How will I afford the cost of returning to education?

Most mature students, studying for the first time, are eligible for government loans to help cover the cost of their studies and potentially help with childcare as well. Visit www.gov.uk/student-finance to find out what you may be entitled to.

Higher education institutions may also provide their own forms of financial support to their students - find out more by contacting your chosen provider or visiting their website



Will I cope with studying after a break from education?

Higher education institutions recognise the challenges that mature learners face in returning to education and there is support available to help you with the transition – unfold the leaflet to find out more about the types of support available.



Can I study part-time?

Most higher education institutions offer part-time courses, which are usually organised in a way that takes account of other commitments. They will, however, take longer to complete. Full-time is obviously a greater time commitment but is completed more quickly and provides the opportunity to focus more intently on what you're studying.

What support is available?

All higher education providers offer a huge range of support to students. This might include:

Academic support/personal tutor, who is your first stop for any problems or questions about anything course-related, including assignments.

Academic skills support, to help you develop and improve study skills such as academic writing, revision, referencing and note-taking.

Employability/careers support, who can advise and assist you with CV writing, job hunting, interviews and so on.

Welfare/wellbeing advice and support, for all mental and physical health problems.

Disability support, provides practical support for disabled students, including those with learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

Students' Union, offering social spaces, clubs, societies and activities for all students, with many providing specific mature students' societies and representation.

Childcare Grant, you may be eligible to receive help with your childcare costs if you are a full-time higher education student with children under the age of fifteen, or seventeen if they have special educational needs. How much you receive will depend on how many children you have and your household income.



“My advice for anyone who is considering coming to university is to know where you're aiming to get to. Knowing what your problems and difficulties are can help people to help you. By utilising all the support available at university, you can make sure you focus on your education.”

Fatima, BA Business Management with a foundation year

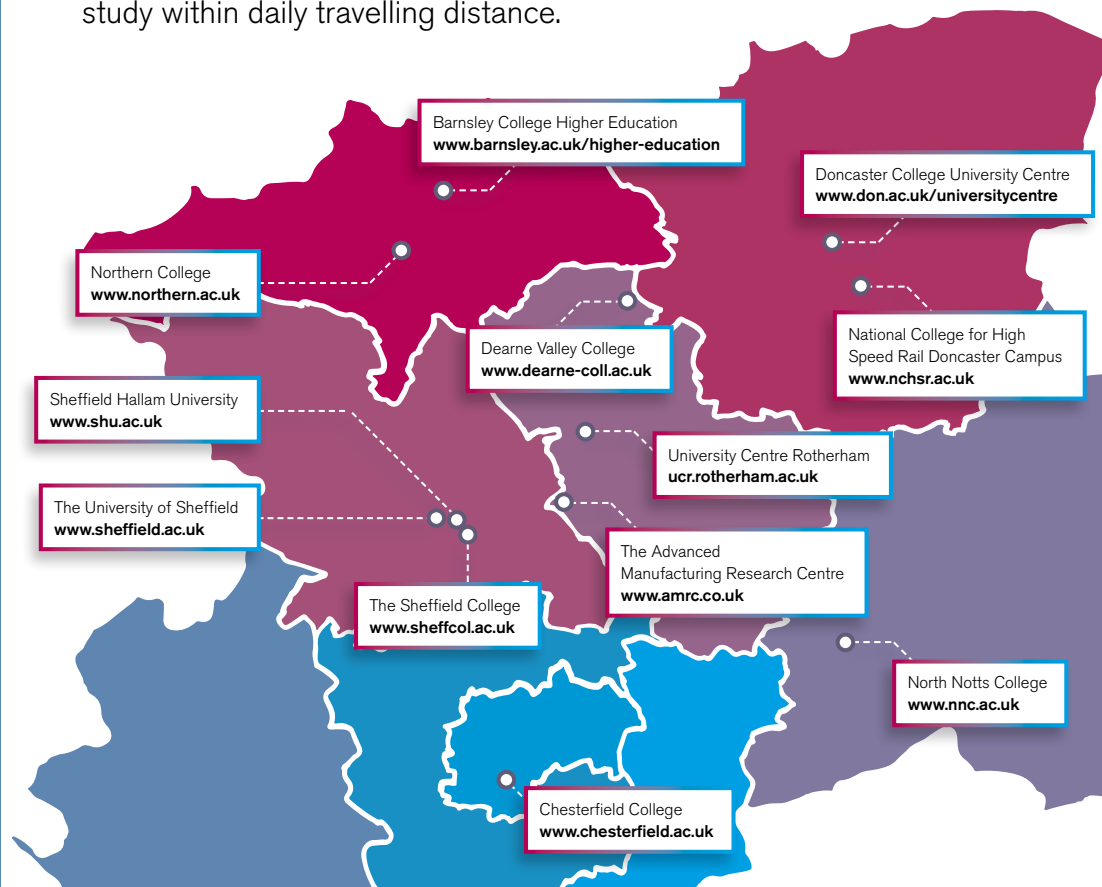
“I've met people with a variety of different experiences, but we share our knowledge together in class. You get to hear different people's experiences and contribute in different ways.”

Sheriff, studying a Master's in Banking and Finance and Student Union President



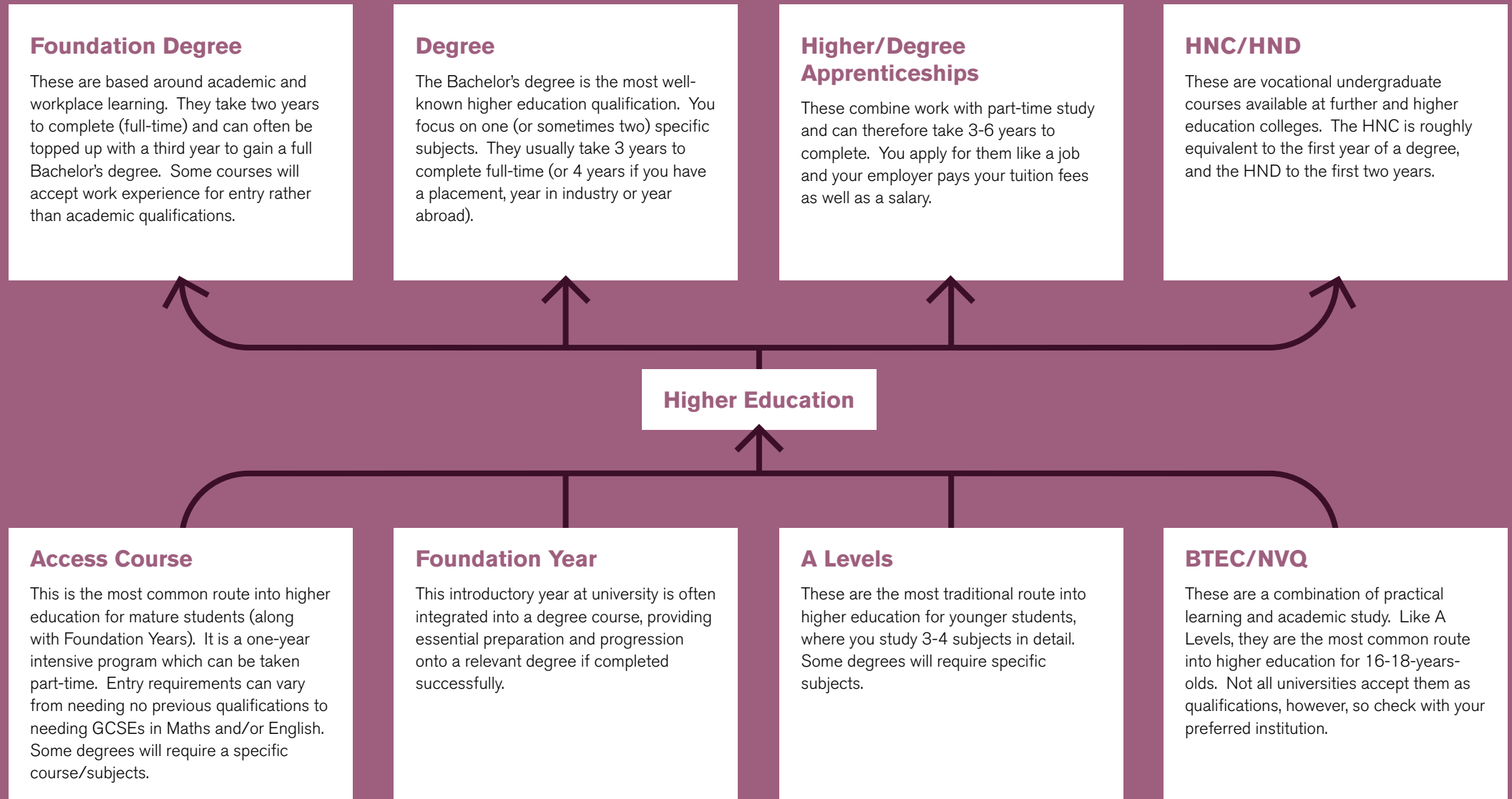
Where can I study?

There are 395 providers of higher education in the UK, so if you want to move to somewhere new then there are plenty of options. However, within the Sheffield City Region there are 12 places you can study within daily travelling distance.



Routes into Higher Education

There are many routes into higher education – this is a brief overview. The best route for you will depend on your personal circumstances and the higher education provider. For more information please visit www.ucas.com or contact the institution you want to go to.

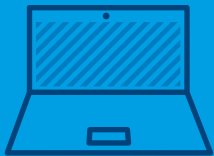


What do I need to do now?

Think about why you want to return to higher education. What's your end goal?



Research potential courses—even courses with the same name can be very different in one institution to another, e.g. different modules offered, different assessment methods. Putting key words into **www.ucas.com** is a good way to find out what's available.



Alternatively, if there's a specific institution you're interested in, go to their website to research the different courses they offer.



Attend open days and taster events.



When you've identified the course(s) and institution(s) you're interested in, then contact the admissions team. They'll be able to chat through your individual circumstances and provide you with personalised advice about the qualifications you have or will need in order to access that course.



The
University
Of
Sheffield.