



# Higher education in the North East quick guide



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# what is higher education?

higher education (HE) qualifications are the qualifications you can study after you complete your level 3 studies (A levels or equivalent)

Studying a higher education qualification is a great way to:

- Get access to exciting job opportunities and career paths and increase your earning potential
- Expand your knowledge on a subject that interests you
- Develop skills and experiences that reach beyond classroom learning
- Meet new people who share your interests

When it comes to HE there are lots of options available to you both in the North East and beyond so it's important to consider all of your options and find the right path for you.

This guide is a quick introduction to the different types of HE qualifications you can study. Use it as a starting point to begin thinking about which HE route will help you reach your goals!

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# level 4

## qualifications

| level | type   |
|-------|--|
| 4     | Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)<br>Higher National Certificate (HNC)<br>Higher Apprenticeship |

## HNC/CertHE

HNCs combine academic and vocational study whilst CertHE courses are often more classroom based. Both courses typically take a year to complete full time and are a great stepping stone to further qualifications and employment.

## Higher Apprenticeship

Higher Apprenticeships are a work based training route which involve splitting your time between the workplace and study at an HE institution.

Taking this route and learning on the job can ensure you develop skills relevant to the industry you re interested in.

This qualification can also be studied at Level 5.

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# level 5



## qualifications

| level | type  |
|-------|---|
| 5     | Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)<br>Higher National Diploma (HND)<br>Foundation Degree |

## HND/DipHE

These courses are typically two years in length when completed full time and are equivalent to studying the first two years of a bachelor's degree.

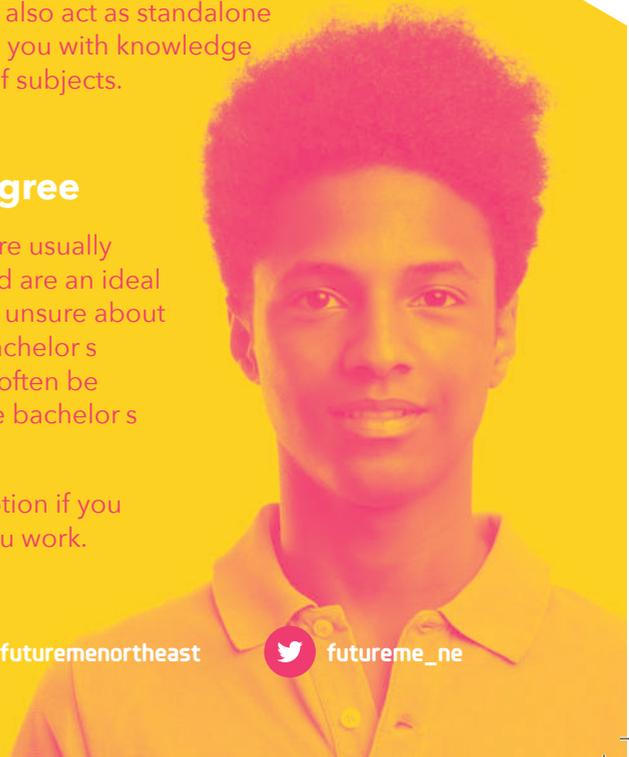
These courses can be topped-up to earn a full bachelor's degree but also act as standalone qualifications to equip you with knowledge and skills in a variety of subjects.

## Foundation Degree

Foundation degrees are usually two years in length and are an ideal qualification if you are unsure about committing to a full bachelor's degree, they can also often be topped-up to achieve bachelor's degree status.

This can be a good option if you want to study while you work.

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# level 6

## qualifications

| level | type                                       |
|-------|--|
| 6     | Bachelor's Degree<br>Degree Apprenticeship |

### Bachelor's Degree

This is the qualification people usually think of when they think about HE. This qualification usually takes three or four years full time and there are a wide range of subjects available to study.

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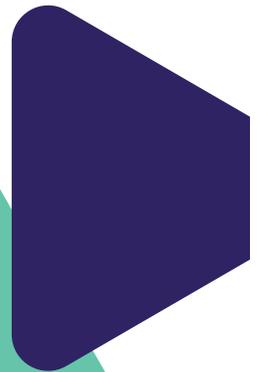
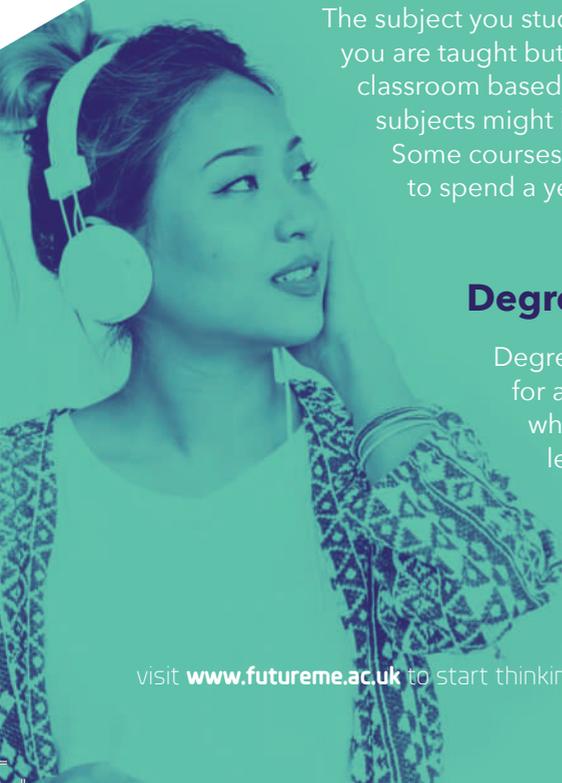
The subject you study can change how you are taught but most teaching involves classroom based study, although some subjects might incorporate practical work. Some courses may also give you the option to spend a year abroad or in industry.

### Degree Apprenticeship

Degree Apprenticeships allow you to study for a full bachelor's degree qualification while working for an employer. You will learn through both on-the-job experience and classroom study.

This qualification can also be studied at level 7 to achieve a master's degree.

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# level 7

## qualifications

| level | type   |
|-------|--|
| 7     | Master s Degree<br>Integrated Master s<br>Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) |

### Master s Degree

A master's degree is a postgraduate qualification - these are studied after completing your bachelor's degree or equivalent level 6 qualification. Master's degrees can be classroom based or research based depending on the subject you study and the type of course you choose.

### Integrated Master s

This qualification allows you to complete both a bachelor's and master's degree in one continuous period of study.

### PGCE

This course allows you to gain qualified teacher status. The course comprises of academic study and assignments in addition to practical placements and assessments in schools.

# level 8

## qualifications

| level | type                   |
|-------|------------------------|
| 8     | Doctorate (PhD, DPhil) |

## Doctorate

During a Doctorate you will focus your study intensively on a very specific area within your field.

It involves a prolonged period of independent research in the area you choose.

If you complete a Doctorate you may also do some teaching with undergraduate students and get involved with conferences and events in your area of study.

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# national vocational qualification (NVQ)



Another HE qualification you may study is an NVQ. NVQs are work based qualifications and are available across several levels.

Learning is mostly work-based and assessment is usually in the form of observation and the submission of a portfolio.

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# ▶ deciding what to do next...

**As well as deciding which qualification you want to study you also need to decide where and how to study.**

You can study HE qualifications at universities and colleges in our region and there are options for lots of courses to study either part time or full time.

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To help you make decisions you need to ask yourself a few key questions:

Do you want to learn through lectures and seminars or by learning on the job?

Do you want to live at home while you study or move out? If you want to move out, how close or far away do you want to be from home?

- Do you want to be able to study part time to fit around work or other commitments?

▶ What career path do you want to follow and what level of qualification do you need to be able to access it?

Being able to answer these questions will help you start planning what the best option is for you!

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# where to find out more

Find out more about HE  
at the FutureMe website  
[www.futureme.ac.uk](http://www.futureme.ac.uk)

Look up HE courses and  
application tips at the UCAS website  
[https://www.ucas.com/ucas/  
undergraduate/getting-started/ucas-  
undergraduate-what-study](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/ucas-undergraduate-what-study)

Search for apprenticeships at the  
National Apprenticeship Service  
website  
[https://www.gov.uk/apply-  
apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

Get some career inspiration  
at the icould website  
<https://icould.com/>

Find out what different jobs involve at  
the National Careers Service website  
[https://nationalcareersservice.direct.  
gov.uk/](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/)

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**FutureMe is working with young people to provide information, advice and support about higher education opportunities in the North East of England.**

The five universities and all of the colleges in the region are working together to create resources and deliver support that will help you think about what you want from your future and consider how higher education could help you reach your goals.

There are so many higher education options in the North East, and we want to make sure you have the opportunity to consider them all!

For more information visit [www.futureme.ac.uk](http://www.futureme.ac.uk)



This work is being carried out as part of the Office for Students Uni Connect Programme.