

Higher Education Admissions Fair



A Guide for Students



'30% of our large undergraduate nursing cohort commence on the basis of Access to HE studies. These students have high retention rates and perform strongly in academic studies, many achieving classifications at 1st and 2:1.'

Jim Bird, Lecturer and
Senior Admissions Tutor,
University of Southampton

The Access to HE Diploma

The Access to HE Diploma is designed to provide academic preparation for higher education study for adults who, because of social, educational or individual circumstances, may have achieved few, if any, prior qualifications.

It does this through enabling students to develop knowledge and understanding in one or more subjects, in addition to the academic skills and confidence needed to prepare for and succeed in higher education.

Most Access to HE Diploma courses are delivered in further education colleges in England and Wales. There are over 1,000 courses available, covering a wide range of different subjects, such as engineering, science, art and design, and business studies, as well as programmes leading to vocational degrees in occupations such as nursing, teaching and social work.

The Access to HE Diploma is widely recognised by UK universities, and many actively encourage applications from Access to HE students. Each year, at least 20,000 Access to HE students are accepted onto higher education courses at UK universities or colleges.

The Access to HE Diploma is a credit-based qualification; students need 60 credits for the achievement of a Diploma.

QAA's role

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) regulates Access to HE courses through the QAA Recognition Scheme for Access to Higher Education.

QAA has managed the scheme for the recognition and quality assurance of Access to HE courses since 1997. We work to ensure Access to HE courses provide a good preparation for higher education for adult students, and that the standard for the award of Access to HE Diplomas is maintained across England and Wales.

QAA licenses Access Validating Agencies (AVAs) to validate Access to HE courses and award Access to HE Diplomas to students. QAA has a remit from government for this work, and Access to HE courses must be recognised by QAA in order to be eligible for public funding. The higher education sector continues to play a role in the design and oversight of Diplomas through relationships with AVAs and providers.

'Increasingly, admissions tutors are recommending mature students to do an Access course, because it prepares them so well for the experience they are going to have in higher education.'

Betsy Bowerman, Mature and Part-Time Student Adviser, University of Bristol



Access to HE evolution

1978-79

First Access to HE courses devised and validated by higher education providers.

1997

Responsibility for Access to HE transferred to QAA. QAA's continuing role in managing Access courses is endorsed by government.

2013

Access to HE students who are 24 or older are offered the opportunity to fund their studies through an Advanced Learning Loan. Those that achieve a Diploma, and progress and complete their higher education, will have the amount outstanding on their loan written off.

2015

Access to HE celebrates its 25th anniversary.

**'Access courses are designed
to help those with low
qualifications but high
ambitions progress into HE;
it is our duty to support
those learners.'**

John Hayes MP, Ministerial statement, July 2012

'Access to HE gave me the opportunity to start afresh, build a career and improve my self-worth.'

Erik Johansson Cox, Research Scientist



Making the most of the fair...

- prepare a list of things you need to find out before you go
- find out where the universities you want to speak to are from the floor plan
- go to the free workshops and make notes
- speak to at least five universities
- pick up lots of leaflets to read when you're back home

Top five things to think about before starting university

- where am I going to live?
- how will I fund my studies?
- where do I have to go on my first day?
- what books and equipment do I need?
- where will I study?

Key statistics

Access to HE students 2013-14

35,295

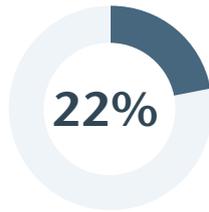
Diploma students applied to higher education via UCAS



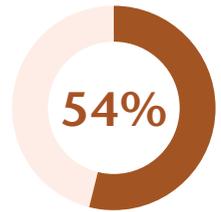
Access to HE students accepted



Students studying full-time



From low participation areas



Studying subjects allied to medicine

44,685

Diploma students

1,119

Diplomas available

88%

employed 6 months post graduation

17%

first class degrees in 2013-14

Since QAA started collecting data in 1999

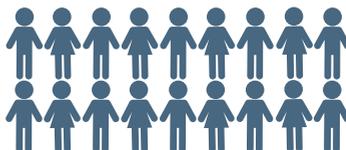
337,577

Students have achieved
an Access to HE diploma



258,907

Access to HE students were
accepted into higher education



**Diplomas are available across
England and Wales in a range
of different subjects, such as
nursing, social studies, law,
and art and design**



www.accesstohe.ac.uk

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QAA

QAA manages the national framework for the recognition and regulation of Access to HE Diplomas. www.qaa.ac.uk