

# FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

Advice for BTEC learners





## GETTING STARTED

### Is university right for me?

University can be an excellent next step after college. It can be a gateway into better career prospects and a higher salary. It is also worth considering that some jobs require a university degree, for example, teaching or nursing. You can study something you love and develop a whole host of transferable skills such as analysis, communication and organisation. You may also like to move away for university for a new experience and to develop your confidence and independence.

### Where to research

- **UCAS** – the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service for a whole host of information on universities, courses, applying, student finance and much more.
- Go direct to a university's website – to check course content, opportunities they offer and entry requirements. You can usually also download or order a prospectus, [here's Reading's](#).
- **The Student Room** – for information directly from students.
- **The Uni Guide** – to compare courses.
- Find out more about our **Open Days** and other **virtual events**.
- Look out for other opportunities like **taster sessions**, summer schools and masterclasses.
- Chat to students directly on Unibuddy – chat to Reading students [here](#).

### Will I be prepared for university?

A BTEC qualification provides you with important skills for studying at university. They work in a similar way to university courses so you will be very prepared to take on a degree. You will have experience in practical based learning, deadlines, research, and industry experience, all of which usually feature in a university degree. This will also help you stand out from the crowd as other applicants will not necessarily have this same type of experience. A lot of styles of teaching and learning at university will be familiar to you and will likely have already developed independence while doing a BTEC which will aid you at university.

### What can I study?

#### Traditional subjects

e.g. English Literature, Biology, Geography

#### Vocational

e.g. Teaching, Pharmacy, Speech and Language Therapy

#### Unusual courses

e.g. Consumer Behaviour and Marketing, Meteorology & Climate

#### Combined Courses

e.g. Art and Psychology, Modern Languages and English Literature

*(Please note some undergraduate courses will require specific subject knowledge for entry. These are examples of courses offered at the University of Reading, check online for a full range of courses on offer.)*



## HOW TO CHOOSE A UNIVERSITY

There are over 300 higher education providers in the UK so you need to find the right one for you. Do you want to move away? To go to a university spread across a city? A small university? Or maybe a campus with everything in one place? Here are some factors to bear in mind:

### Type of university

- City or campus based
- Large or small
- Reputation (university & subject rankings)



### Location

- Travel times and cost
- Living costs
- Type of area
- Do you want to move away?



### Range of facilities

- Course based
- Accommodation
- Sports
- Social facilities



### How to choose a course

There are over 50,000 different university courses across the UK. It is important to do your **research** and make sure you choose the right one for you, make sure you check **what content the course will cover and how you will be taught and assessed**. Remember that every degree is different, even if they have the same title at different universities.

You will also need to find out the **entry requirements** for your course. You can usually do this on the university website. Many universities accept BTEC qualifications but sometimes only express their grade requirements in A levels. Do not let this

discourage you, it is worth looking at their entry requirement pages or contacting their admissions department to check the BTEC requirements and make sure you are on track to match their criteria.

It is also worth checking to see if the **modules** you have studied as a part of your BTEC allow you to progress onto an undergraduate course. For instance, if you are studying a BTEC in Applied Science, have you taken enough Biology and Chemistry modules to gain access to a science undergraduate course which requests two science subjects in their entry requirements?

### University compared to College

**Independence:** University requires you to take control of your learning, meet deadlines and be an independent learner. A BTEC will have prepared you well for this and support is always available if needed.

**Course:** A degree gives you the opportunity to study a subject area in detail, covering more depth and are often taught by leading experts in the field. You may also get to choose what areas you want to focus on through optional modules.

**Teaching and learning:** How you are taught depends on your course, but you might experience lectures (usually large classes with a lecturer presenting on a topic), seminars (classroom discussion based), workshops, lab work, placements and practicals.

**Student life:** University offers a whole host of opportunities. In addition to your degree, you might like to take up work experience, study abroad, join a sport or society and get involved in university events.



Autumn Beddoe, BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma  
Performing Arts (Musical Theatre), BA (Hons)  
Education Studies

## TRANSITION FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

“Starting at the University of Reading I was overwhelmed by how much I felt like myself, as though it was already a new home. My Performing Arts BTEC set me up for my Education Studies degree because I wasn’t fazed by the workload and structure of different modules.”



## HOW TO APPLY

**September:** Applications open. Apply online via UCAS.

- You get to make 5 choices – so pick wisely, make sure you have the correct entry requirements.
- Check if there are specific modules you should have studied as a part of your BTEC qualification.

**Mid January:** Deadline for applications for most courses. Make sure you apply before the deadline.

**May:** Majority of offers made by this date.

- If you do not receive offers at the same time as your friends this is normal. Each institution makes offers at different rates.
- You can follow the progress of your application by viewing UCAS.
- When you reply and view your offers, you get one firm and one insurance choice.

**May/June:** Reply to your offers.

- Make sure you reply to your offers before the deadline on UCAS.
- Decide on your firm and insurance choice institution.





**August:** Results Day.

## TOP TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT



- Don't underestimate the workload you've completed to obtain your qualification.
- Studying one subject, for instance a BTEC extended diploma, demonstrates an understanding of, and commitment to, the subject.
- You may not have needed to split your time across three different subjects, so you may benefit from having explored wider topics and themes within your discipline.
- Have you undertaken relevant work experience? BTEC students are likely to have gained relevant work experience as part of their course. You may have worked on live briefs with employers, for example, among other tasks and responsibilities. You can use these to illustrate insights you've gained and how you've engaged with a subject.
- As a part of your qualification, you may have achieved more independent studying due to the portfolio-based nature of your course. Independent studying is a key skill that you need to succeed at university. You may have already developed this skill during your current course.
- The time management and self-organisation skills you may have developed will aid you in undergraduate success.
- If you're studying at a college, you could reflect on how the learning environment is similar to that of a university.
- You can showcase your practical experience from your qualification to highlight the skills you have learnt.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

-  UniofReading Facebook
-  @UniofReading Instagram
-  @UniofReading Twitter
-  Outreach YouTube

### GET IN TOUCH

Register your interest in a subject  
Ask us a question

