

Choosing advanced (Level 3) study



There are many courses and subjects at Level 3 but they are all different.

Level 3 courses can be general, work related or job specific (vocational). Most of them prepare you for higher education but they're also useful if you want to go into a job at 18. Job specific qualifications (taken at college, school or through an apprenticeship) can lead to higher education too.

Choose carefully because the choices you make may affect your future career. Check entry requirements for any careers or higher education courses that you're interested in and get advice from your Connexions Personal Adviser.

To help you find some answers, make use of:

- careers information in your school, college or Connexions centre
- college and sixth form open evenings, plus training provider and employer events
- your Connexions Personal Adviser.

It's important to choose a course that you'll enjoy but also one that offers you the best chance of success. Ask yourself:

- **Will I enjoy the subject or course?**
What are my favourite subjects? Am I interested in any new subjects or courses? Will the subject or course be what I expect?
- **Which subjects am I good at and what are my estimated grades?**
Will I cope with advanced level study? Will I meet the entry requirements?
- **Is the learning style right for me?**
How do I learn best? Is it through seeing and reading, listening and talking or touching and doing? Am I choosing courses or subjects that will let me learn like this?
- **Are the assessment methods right for me?**
Do I do well in exams or are projects or course work better for me?
- **How will the subject or course help me in the future?**
What careers or higher education course am I thinking about? What qualifications, subjects, grades and experience do they need?
- **Where do I want to study?**
At a college or a school sixth form or in work as an apprentice?

"42% of 18 to 30 year olds believe they took the wrong educational path.*"



Always have a 'Plan B' in case your first choice doesn't work out. This could mean:

applying for both Level 2 and 3 courses in case you don't get the grades for Level 3 or looking at full time courses, in case you can't find an apprenticeship.

*(Edge Foundation 2007)

Sheffield futures

Want to know more?

www.getconnectedsheffield.com & www.applysheffield.org.uk – for local vacancies
www.apprenticeships.org.uk – for apprenticeship vacancies across the country
www.connexions-direct.com & www.ucas.com



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These are the main Level 3 qualifications currently offered in Sheffield:

Qualification	Subjects/Study Methods/Assessment	Usual Entry Requirements
<p>Advanced (or Progression) Diploma</p> <p>New full time, 2 year courses combining general and work related learning.</p>	<p>Currently in 10 work sectors, including Engineering, IT or Society, Health and Development.</p> <p>Can be combined with an A Level or another Level 3 qualification.</p> <p>There will be classroom study, practical activities, projects and work experience.</p>	<p>At least 5 GCSEs A*- C grades (including English and Maths) or the Higher Diploma.</p>
<p>BTEC National</p> <p>Full time, 2 year work related courses. Can sometimes be taken part time, e.g. through an Apprenticeship.</p>	<p>A range of subjects, from Animal Care to Travel and Tourism.</p> <p>There is classroom study and practical learning. Assessment is mainly by coursework and projects, not exams.</p>	<p>At least 4-5 GCSE A*-Cs or another acceptable Level 2 qualification.</p> <p>Most courses require specific GCSE subjects e.g. English or Maths.</p>
<p>CACHE Diploma</p> <p>A full time two year vocationally related course in Child Care and Education.</p>	<p>There will be classroom study, assignments and regular work placements.</p> <p>Assessment is by assignments, tests, a research study and a portfolio.</p>	<p>4-5 GCSE A*-Cs (often including English Language) or another acceptable Level 2 qualification.</p>
<p>GCE AS and A2 (A Levels)</p> <p>General or applied subjects usually studied full time. Can sometimes be combined with another qualification e.g. an Advanced Diploma.</p>	<p>In two parts: Year 1 leads to AS and you must succeed at this before starting A2.</p> <p>You usually study 3-4 subjects.</p> <p>There is intensive reading and written work. Assessment is mostly by exam.</p> <p>Applied subjects involve more practical learning and course work; they can sometimes lead to a double award (worth 2 A Levels).</p>	<p>At least 5 A*-C grades, often including English or Maths.</p> <p>Some subjects have additional entry requirements.</p>
<p>International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB)</p> <p>A full time 2 year, general course.</p>	<p>You study a range of subjects including languages, sciences, maths, the arts and geography or history or psychology.</p> <p>It leads to a single qualification.</p> <p>Assessment is mainly by exams at the end of the course.</p>	<p>At least 5 GCSE A*- C grades including English and Maths.</p> <p>This isn't currently available in Sheffield but look out for updates on www.applysheffield.org.uk</p>
<p>NVQs and other Job specific qualifications</p> <p>Generally taken in an Apprenticeship or job but there are some full time courses.</p>	<p>These prepare you for a specific job. There is a wide range of courses, from Accounting to Sign Making.</p> <p>The learning is often practical or technical. You are observed at work and produce a portfolio. You can learn at your own pace.</p>	<p>You usually complete Level 2 first.</p> <p>You may need GCSE grades A*-D.</p> <p>There may be entry tests or interviews.</p>