



# Course types explained

We offer a range of foundation degrees, undergraduate degrees, fast-track degrees, top-up degrees, professional courses, and postgraduate taught and research degrees. You can find the entry requirements for each course on the relevant course page on our website.

## What are qualification levels? (eg level 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8)

Most courses carry a qualification level as outlined by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The level of a course is determined by the depth of skill you are required to demonstrate in order to gain the qualification, such as your level of knowledge, critical analysis, problem-solving ability, originality, or technical skill.

For example, A Levels are equivalent to Level 3, whereas full undergraduate honours degrees begin at Level 4, progress through Level 5 and usually finish at Level 6 to give you a Level 6 qualification. The scale continues up to Level 8, which applies for Doctorate level qualifications.

## What are modules?

Undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees are made up of individual study units called modules. Some modules are compulsory, meaning you must study them as part of your selected degree. Other modules are optional, meaning you can choose which ones you would prefer to study as part of your selected degree. As an undergraduate student you can also choose to take modules from other courses, enabling you to study other areas of interest to you.

Each of our course pages will have a link called 'Course maps'. This will show you all the modules currently available to study on that particular course.

## What are foundation degrees?

Foundation degrees are equivalent to two thirds of a full undergraduate honours degree. Designed to meet workplace needs, foundation degrees combine academic study with advanced personal, professional and employability skills. Once you've successfully completed a foundation degree you can upgrade your qualification to a full undergraduate honours degree by joining the relevant year of an undergraduate honours degree course. Alternatively, you can apply to a related Level 6 top-up course in order to achieve a full undergraduate honours degree.

Our foundation courses can either be classed as a Foundation Arts Degrees (FdA) or a Foundation Science Degree (FdSc), depending on the level of scientific content included on the course.

A full-time foundation degree usually takes two years to complete.

## What are undergraduate honours degrees?

Our undergraduate honours degrees usually include 24 modules including a dissertation (a large final year project). Some of these modules may be double modules. Depending on the content of your course, undergraduate honours degrees can either be classed as a Bachelor of Arts Degrees (BA), a Bachelor of Science Degree (BSc), a Bachelor of Education Degree (BEd) or a Bachelor of Law (LLB).

Studying a full-time undergraduate honours degree usually takes three years to complete. If an undergraduate honours degree includes a year-long work placement, this is often referred to as a sandwich degree and will usually take four years including the placement year.

## What are sandwich degrees?

A sandwich degree is an undergraduate honours degree that includes an in-built year-long work placement. See 'What is an undergraduate honours degree?' above for more details on undergraduate honours degrees.

## What are fast-tracked degrees?

A fast-track degree offers you the same skills and qualifications as an undergraduate honours degree but in a shorter amount of time, for example, two years rather than three. This enables you to obtain your qualification sooner, which can save you money and allow you to enter, or re-enter, the job market sooner. On a fast-track degree, you will receive the same level of student support and be able to use all of the same facilities as students on our equivalent three or four-year degrees.

## What are level 6 top-up degrees?

Level 6 is equivalent to the third year of an undergraduate honours degree. Level 6 top-up degrees usually take a single year to complete and can be studied if you have already completed a relevant foundation degree or equivalent qualification. This allows you to 'top-up' your foundation degree to a full undergraduate honours degree. See 'What is an undergraduate honours degree?', or 'What is a foundation degree?' above for more details.

## What are teacher training courses?

We offer a range of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) routes that enable you to achieve qualified teacher status (QTS). If you already have an undergraduate honours degree you can train to become a primary or secondary teacher by studying our one-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). If you have not yet completed an undergraduate honours degree you can choose to study for a BEd Primary Education degree.

## What are postgraduate taught qualifications?

Postgraduate taught qualifications are similar to undergraduate degrees in structure in so far as they include a timetable of taught modules. To achieve a full postgraduate degree you will need to have completed all three stages of the degree programme. These stages can also usually be studied separately to achieve individual qualifications. These three stages are:

- **Stage one:** Postgraduate Certificate
- **Stage two:** Postgraduate Diploma
- **Stage three:** Master of Arts, Science, Education or Business (MA, MSc, Med or MBA)

Usually you need a good honours degree or equivalent to study a postgraduate qualification, but other qualifications, skills and experience will also be considered. Please see individual course pages for specific entry requirements.

## What are postgraduate research degrees?

A research degree involves defining your own area of research enquiry and devising methods to answer the questions which you yourself construct. We offer a range of postgraduate research opportunities across the university where you can work on your individual research topic alongside experienced researchers and supervisors.

Usually you need a good honours degree or equivalent to study a postgraduate degree, but other qualifications, skills and experience will also be considered. Please see individual course pages for specific entry requirements.

Our research degrees include Master of Arts (MA by Research), Master of Science (MSc by Research), Master of Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Doctor of Engineering (DEng), Doctor of Media and Communications (DMC) and Professional Doctorate in Sport & Exercise (DES).

## What are professional courses?

Our professional courses are designed specifically for professionals who already have some experience of work within industry. The nature of professional study means you'll learn with people from a wide range of occupations. This variety of experience and backgrounds provides a stimulating and supportive learning environment. Our professional courses vary in length and entry requirements so please check the course pages for more details.

## What are short courses?

Short courses offer a wide range of opportunities to improve your knowledge and sharpen your skills, both personally and professionally. They are also a good opportunity to try something new.

If you can't see a short course that meets your requirements, our staff will happily tailor or create new courses that meet your organisational needs.

Our short courses are managed by our partner organisation, the Growth Hub, which is based at our Oxstalls campus in Gloucester. The campus of study varies depending on the course so please check the study location details before joining a short course.

To find out more please contact our business development team on **01242 714500** or email [shortcourses@glos.ac.uk](mailto:shortcourses@glos.ac.uk)

## Where can I find out more

Call us on **03330 141414** and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have or connect you to the relevant course expert or department.