

# Guide to HEFC Access to HE Diploma



**Skills  
Funding  
Agency**



**Newcastle**  
City Council 



**Newcastle City Learning**  
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## Welcome to Newcastle City Learning

We hope that you find this guide useful in helping you to decide which HEFC Access to Higher Education Diploma course you would like to take with us.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact:

**West Gate Community College**  
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## Who is the course for?

The HEFC Access to HE Diploma has been designed for those who want to return to learning after a few years out of education. Some go on to take further study at university or college; others want to improve their job prospects whilst some simply want to see if their brain is still working! Whatever your reasons for starting, you will find that you will be learning with other adults who all want to learn.

Whilst the HEFC Access to HE Diploma is an open access course (this means that there are no pre-entry qualification requirements), you will require good communication skills and Level 2 Literacy and Numeracy Skills are strongly recommended. **If you do not have these qualifications or if English is your second language, we will carry out an initial assessment to assess your level and arrange the appropriate support which will be essential to your progress into HEFC.**

**Additionally, if you wish to study the Information Technology Module it is expected that you will have a certain level of skill and you will need to seek advice from the course tutor before enrolling.**

The HEFC Access to HE Diploma will help to build your confidence and develop your social and communication skills as well as increasing your knowledge of particular subject areas. It offers an alternative route into higher education for learners who do not have Advanced GCE or VCE qualifications and, unlike traditional 'A' Levels, it does not assume that you are progressing immediately from GCSE.

The course is also available to learners who may have achieved individual HEFC modules within the last five years and now wish to complete the full HEFC Access to HE Diploma.

### **How does the course work?**

The HEFC Access to HE Diploma is delivered in partnership with Northumbria University and Ascentis (previously OCNW). Although the University does not deliver the programme, it provides the moderators and a fully recognised University award to learners who successfully complete the qualification. The University has keenly supported Access to Higher Education for over 20 years and takes over 300 learners each year onto its degree and diploma programmes. Of course our learners are equally welcomed at other universities.

It is made up of three optional subject modules and the compulsory HE Toolbox. Each subject module is delivered over 30 weeks and is divided into two units which are offered at level 3. A single subject module requires attendance at one, three hour session per week. It is possible to complete the Diploma in one academic year, but we would normally recommend that you spread the modules over two years.

### **Access to Higher Education Pathways**

Our HEFC Access to HE Diploma offers seven Access to HE Pathways. Your choice of Pathway will be determined by the degree course or future career you wish to follow. The Diploma itself is very flexible and allows you to mix and match the optional subject modules you wish to take. However the combination of subjects you choose must make up a coherent programme of study. If you are unsure, further details and advice on Pathways will be given during your induction interview. Our current Pathways are:

- Business, Legal and Language Studies
- Combined Studies
- Creative and Visual Arts
- Education Studies and Early Years Professions
- Health, Social Care and Professional Practice
- Science, Engineering and Computing
- Social Sciences and Humanities

For each pathway there is a suggested combination of subject modules to take. (Please see separate sheet).

#### **Important Note**

**Your chosen profession may require registration with a specific professional body. It is important to note that these professional bodies will require GCSE grade C or equivalent in English Language and Maths. If you do not have these qualifications, you should ensure that English Language and Quantitative Methods or Mathematical Studies are included in your module choices.**

## Modules

We can offer a wide range of modules at a variety of days and times. In order to complete the HEFC Access to HE Diploma you will need to choose three optional subject modules and complete the compulsory HE Toolbox.

Each module is divided into two units and offered at level 3. A single module is designed to take one academic year to complete and requires attendance for one session per week. It is possible to complete all four modules in one academic year, but we would recommend that you spread the modules over two years. Currently individual module achievements are valid for up to five years.

### Optional subject modules currently offered are:

Art	Geography	Mathematical Studies
Business Studies	Graphic Design	Physics
Chemistry	Health Studies	Psychology
Counselling*	Historical Studies	Quantitative Methods
Criminology	Human Biology	Social Welfare
English Language	IT	Sociology
English Literature	Law	<b>*Awaiting approval</b>

## HE Toolbox

HE Toolbox is a separate, compulsory module of the HEFC Access to HE Diploma and aims to prepare learners for study at Higher Education level. It is designed to help you develop a range of advanced study skills necessary for academic success in Higher Education and will increase your confidence in your ability to study effectively. Many of the elements assessed in HE Toolbox are present in your module choices, but you will need to attend a separate session dedicated to Toolbox. This module is delivered over thirty weeks and combined with your subject and tutorial support.

### How much time will I have to give to my studies?

This is always a difficult question to answer, but you will need to devote time both at College and at home.

- **At College**  
As previously mentioned, a single module requires attendance for one, three hour session per week.
- **At Home**  
You will also have to commit to working away from college on homework assignments, project and revision. We would normally recommend that you set aside one hour of personal study for every hour you are taught.

## Can I get extra help with my studies?

We appreciate that coming back into education is a difficult decision to make so our aim is to ensure that when you come here you are supported in your learning. In our satisfaction survey, 97% of our learners said that they were happy with the support which we gave them throughout the course.

We can offer support in the following areas:

- ICT
- UCAS applications – please note that applications for University entry for very popular courses (e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Teacher Training) need to be made early.
- Library facilities at Northumbria University
- Help with Literacy and Numeracy is available through our Skills for Life Service. They can be contacted on 0191 278 2824.

It is important that you tell us as soon as possible if you feel that you may have other support requirements so that we can identify and implement the additional support required.

## How are HEFC modules assessed?

Typically, unit 1 is assessed by one assignment and one End Test. Unit 2 is assessed by one assignment and an Examination. Details of the assessment procedures for each module can be found in the module descriptor.

## When and where will you take the tests?

- **Unit 1**  
End tests are taken at the end of unit 1. They are time constrained but are taken during normal class time.
- **Unit 2**  
A fixed examination timetable is published by the Northumbria University before the start of the new academic year. Traditionally, examinations are held in June at the location where you have been taught. Examinations are held **during the day** under examination conditions and the date and time cannot be changed.

**Learners must not book holidays during assessment periods as assessment dates cannot be changed.**

## Who can I ask for advice?

There are a number of experienced and qualified staff to help you at both Newcastle City Learning centres:

- The HEFC Co-ordinators
  - Maria Hawthorne on 0191 298 6960  
or email [maria.hawthorne@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:maria.hawthorne@newcastle.gov.uk)
  - Melanie Rayson on 0191 255 9101  
or email [melanie.rayson@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:melanie.rayson@newcastle.gov.uk)
- Our office staff and tutors at West Gate
- Access Guidance Centre at Northumbria University 0191 227 4323

- You can also find more information at:  
Admission of students and the Access to HE Diploma  
<http://www.accesstohe.ac.uk>

Northumbria University entry requirements  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk/brochure/courses/>

Northumbria University Pre-entry advice and guidance  
at <http://northumbria.ac.uk/brochure/agc/>

**It is strongly recommended that learners also contact their intended university before starting their Access to HE programme to ensure that their subject choices and previous qualifications are appropriate for progression to their proposed higher education programme.**

## **Is there any financial help available?**

There is a range of help which you may be able to access, including:

- All learners in receipt of an eligible 'active' benefit receive **full fee remission**.
- You may be eligible for the Adult learning Grant.
- Learners over 19 who receive benefits or are on low income (Household income of less than £15,276) may qualify for help through the **Access Fund**. This can help with fees, books and other resources. Learners over 20 who receive benefits or are on a low income may qualify for childcare funding.

- If you are aged over 19 and do not have a full level two qualification, then you may also be eligible for fee remission.
- If you are aged over 19 and under 24 at the start of the course and this is your first full level three qualification, then you may also be eligible for fee remission.

## **When can I start?**

Our courses start in September. For more information, simply contact us to find out which is the most appropriate for you.

## **How do I enrol?**

It is always best to have a chat with our enrolment team or one of our HEFC Coordinators. Once you've decided which course(s) you would like to do, just complete an enrolment and registration form. Please note that if you wish to claim fee remission you will need to provide proof of benefit with your enrolment.

**We look forward to seeing you in September!**

