

*Thinking of going into
Higher Education?*

21 or over?

Not sure where to start?

Making a decision about University or College can be a difficult one— even more so if it's been some time since you have been in education. As a Mature student, you will usually have different factors to consider when making the decision about where to go and what to study.

The intention of this guide is to answer some of the common questions you may have if you are considering going into Higher Education. If you need information that is more specific to your individual needs, then please contact **Richard Vivian** on:

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adult
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What is a Mature student?

For University or College courses, a Mature student is defined as a person 21 or over **at the start of the course.**

For the purposes of Guernsey Grants/Loans, an **Independent** student is someone who is either 25 or is at least 20 and has supported themselves for at least 3 years before the start of the course. If you are classed as an Independent student for Grants/Loans then your funding application will not be subject to parental means testing. The income of any partner or spouse will be taken into consideration if applicable.

What difference does being a Mature student make?

If you are classed as a Mature student, Universities and Colleges will view your application differently and sometimes more favorably.

In what way?

Many Institutions will not insist on the normal entry requirements for courses, although they may wish to see evidence of recent study on your part. They will also take into account your other experiences in life and work when considering your application. For some courses it may still be necessary to have the underpinning knowledge of particular 'A' Levels or their equivalent in order to cope with the work at Higher Education level. This is very common for Science based courses for example.

Am I too mature to be a student?

There are a few vocational courses where an upper age limit may apply. The recent introduction of Age Discrimination legislation has challenged this however, and as a general rule age should not be a barrier unless a legitimate reason can be given e.g. length and cost of training in Medicine.

Will I feel out of place?

In 2007, almost a quarter of students accepted onto Higher Education courses in the UK were aged 21 or over, so there are a very healthy number of Mature students. This figure can vary tremendously between institutions though— for example, the Mature student population of Oxbridge Colleges is about 2%, but the University of East London has a 70% proportion of Mature students.

Do I apply in the normal way?

Yes, but it is usually recommended that you speak to an admissions tutor from the course you are interested in before making a formal application. This is because each institution will have its own policies and entry requirements for those over 21.

What if I have children?

If you are going to need childcare support, contact the student services office of your chosen university or college at an early stage to find out what provision is available, how much it will cost and whether it will give you sufficient time to study. Facilities can vary and there is often competition for places. It is therefore a good idea to apply early for places at a nursery or crèche.

There is an extra allowance on student grants for each dependant child you have.

Where do I start looking for courses?

Go to www.ucas.co.uk to start a comprehensive course search, and for all the information you need about applying.

Can I talk to someone about my plans?

If you would like to talk through your plans and ideas, or if you feel you need support with your application, then please contact Adult Guidance.