

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Am I ready for higher education?

It is important that you feel ready – intellectually, emotionally and financially – before you start higher education if you want to get the most out of the experience.

Consider the following indications that you might be ready for Higher Education. Check whether they apply to you.

- Successful course completion at an advanced level (A-level, specialised diploma, Baccalaureate, BTEC, foundation, access or preparatory programme) in a subject similar to the one you intend to study
- Advanced study was not a great struggle for you
- The course is related to your current profession and level of work
- You have GCSE English (plus maths for many courses), or the equivalent
- You regularly read advanced texts, such as a quality newspaper and several books a year, whether by eye, or using audiobooks
- You have had recent practice at writing essays, reports, projects or a similar level of writing
- You are reasonably confident about being able to work on your own, without help, for most of the time (though the college may offer specific help for students from overseas or with disabilities, including dyslexia)
- You have strategies for coping with anxiety
- You can translate your personal skills into academic ones
- You can type or word-process reasonably well
- You are comfortable using a library
- You are able, or willing to learn, to use a computer

2. How does university differ from my previous studies

Every new level of learning requires a higher level of skills. Study skills that you used at school will need to be developed further for you to be effective in Higher Education. For example, university and many college courses emphasise the importance of independent study. Their timetables are structured in order to give you time to develop your skills and knowledge freely. This requires discipline and motivation.

Independent study is about being able to find things out for yourself, to understand and critique what other people have thought and to develop coherent ideas of your own. In schools it is common for students to be given feedback on work before it is submitted for assessment. This is much less likely to be the case at university. You will be expected to manage your assignments independently and, if you fail, you may only be eligible to achieve the lowest pass mark with a resubmission.

3. How will I manage such a big change?

It's perfectly normal to be uncertain about starting a new chapter in your education. Perhaps you will be moving to a different part of the country, or even a new country altogether. You will certainly meet many new people.

It may help to remove some of these unknowns by talking to people who have been to university and seeing how they overcame these anxieties. Read through the welcome pack of your chosen institution for an idea of what to expect.

For many students, making the decision to attend college or university is a big step in their personal development. Contemplating whether it is the right decision for you requires a lot of courage and self-knowledge.

Even if you are confident that you want to further your education, anxieties may still remain. Try not to lose sight of the exciting opportunities that await you.

4. Am I intelligent enough?

skills4studycampus is based on the premise that what we regard as intelligence is often a question of good study habits, strategies and skills that you can develop. For example, research shows that students who do best at problem-solving spend longer than students in working out exactly what the problem is before trying to solve it. Other students look at the surface of the problem and do not see the underlying structure which connects it to the problems they already know how to solve. Some students fail because they don't spend enough time considering the examples and information they are given.

With most university assignments you will benefit from taking time to reflect, clarifying what is really being asked, the issues within the title, the reasons for that piece of work being set, and the best strategy to use. Over time, this way of working becomes a habit.

Consider that many areas of human excellence cannot easily be measured – such as artistic and musical creativity, emotional maturity, intuition, sensitivity to the needs of others, keeping a cool head in emergencies, and inventiveness. Some people may excel in these areas and yet perform poorly in tests that are language-based.