


Levels: What do they mean?

When applying for further education courses, you have to know what Level to apply to. Below tells you which level you should consider:

Level 1


- first certificate
- GCSE - grades 3, 2, 1 or grades D, E, F, G
- level 1 award/certificate
- NVQ level 1
- level 1 essential skills
- level 1 functional skills
- level 1 national vocational qualification (NVQ)
- music grades 1, 2 and 3



If you are not able to achieve any GCSE grades, this is likely the level you will need to apply for

Level 2


- CSE - grade 1
- GCSE - grades 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 or grades A*, A, B, C
- intermediate apprenticeship
- level 2 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ
- level 2 ESOL
- level 2 essential skills
- level 2 functional skills
- music grades 4 and 5
- O level - grade A, B or C



If you achieve GCSEs at grades 1, 2 or 3 this is the level you should apply for

Level 3

- A level
- access to higher education diploma
- advanced apprenticeship
- applied general
- AS level
- international Baccalaureate diploma
- level 3 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ
- music grades 6, 7 and 8
- tech level



If you achieve GCSEs at grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 this is the level you should apply for

Level 4

- certificate of higher education (CertHE)
- higher apprenticeship
- higher national certificate (HNC)
- level 4 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ

Level 5

- diploma of higher education (DipHE)
- foundation degree
- higher national diploma (HND)
- level 5 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ

Level 6

- degree apprenticeship
- degree with honours - for example bachelor of the arts (BA) honours, bachelor of science (BSc) honours
- graduate certificate
- graduate diploma
- level 6 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ
- ordinary degree without honours

Level 7

- integrated master's degree, for example master of engineering (MEng)
- level 7 award/certificate/diploma/NVQ
- master's degree, for example master of arts (MA), master of science (MSc)
- postgraduate certificate
- postgraduate certificate in education/teacher training certificate (PGCE)
- postgraduate diploma

Level 8

- doctorate, for example doctor of philosophy (PhD or DPhil)
- level 8 award/certificate/diploma