



(BRITISH COUNCIL LEAFLETS -
FURTHER EDUCATION IN THE UK)

FURTHER EDUCATION IN THE UK

- "It's all about choice!" -

When it comes to studying in the UK, overseas students face an exciting range of opportunities. An impressive number of colleges and universities provide both vocational training and academic courses in many subject areas.

UK qualifications are recognised throughout the world as being of the highest standard. As a stepping-stone to a better career, studying in the UK makes a lot of sense. And as a stimulating environment in which to study and live, the UK has to be the number one choice.

sub: **"So many top quality courses
- with internationally respected qualifications"**

Education of the highest quality is assured when you study in the UK. To gain most from the system, however, it is important to choose the right course.

Do you, for example, train for a specific job area on a vocational course - or do you choose an academic course which will allow you to move on to degree-level or post-graduate study?

Whichever route you take, UK colleges cover all the main subject areas, and in all cases you will gain qualifications awarded by officially-approved bodies.

Your choice of course should take into account long-term employment aims as well as an honest assessment of your own academic ability.

In certain cases, you may not need standard entry-level qualifications to enrol on

a course. Again, if you opt for a General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ), assessment will be based largely on course work and assignments rather than entirely by examination.

These qualifications are an alternative to the more academic A-levels and will give you the option of either going to a university or into a specific job area. GNVQs are offered in business, science, engineering, information technology, leisure and tourism as well as many other popular subjects.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are not as broadly-based as GNVQs, and differ by being specifically work-related. Qualifications are attained not by passing examinations, but by the assessment of a student's work in a real or simulated work-place. NVQs are available in areas such as office-related subjects, hotel and catering and beauty therapy.

A major attraction of the UK system of further education is its flexibility. This can be seen in the variety of full and part-time work-related courses validated by internationally-recognised bodies such as the RSA, CGLI and BTEC/SCOTVEC.

In addition, there are the highly regarded qualifications offered by professional bodies for careers in accountancy, architecture, medicine and so on. Most professions will normally expect a university degree before you can take their qualifying examinations.

If you intend to go to university, you can either take a one-year access course (if you're aged over 19), although the most common entrance requirements are A-levels in two to four subjects.

Most UK colleges offer A-level courses which can be taken over a one or two-year period. Minimum entry requirements for these courses are usually four GCSEs at grade A-C. Both A-levels and their Scottish equivalent, 'Highers', are recognised world-wide.

sub: **"An excellent choice of colleges
- and a welcome for overseas students!"**

To make the most of studying in the UK, overseas students need to consider a wide range of factors which may affect the success of what is a major commitment in time and money.

The first step is to decide on the college, the course and the qualifications. Information is available from a variety of sources including education exhibitions, British Council offices, agents, career advisers and college representatives. You

will also find useful information in education directories and magazines, as well as in individual college prospectuses.

As an overseas student, it is important to look at the broader amenities available in colleges. If you're not totally fluent in English, for instance, you should check out whether English language teaching facilities are available and whether the teaching runs alongside that of your chosen course. It's worth remembering that there's a strong link between language skills and successful study.

Independent sector colleges are often strong in this area. Smaller class sizes, individual attention and extra tuition in English could well benefit students who are new to the UK and its education system.

About 15 per cent of students in further and higher education are in the independent sector, although it is important to check that they are accredited by either the British Council or the British Accreditation Council.

Your choice of college - in either the independent or state sector - should take account of your personal strengths and priorities. For example, the location of a college is obviously important if you want to live near a friend or family member.

If you're disabled - in a wheelchair perhaps - you need to check that your chosen college can support your needs. A disability should be no barrier to study, so if your first-choice college cannot support you, there are sure to be others that will.

Overseas students coming to the UK as part of a family group need to consider how the college and local facilities suit their relatives' needs. Inadequate facilities will affect family harmony and your own ability to study effectively.

Other factors affecting the study performance of all international students include securing suitable accommodation and ensuring that there are facilities to support religious, cultural and social needs. In the multi-cultural UK, this need not be a problem.

Finally, check whether the college has a specialist who provides advice and guidance for overseas students on matters such as immigration and legal matters, codes of behaviour, cultural and social issues, English language support and so on.

sub: **"Town or country
- you're sure to enjoy your stay!"**

With hundreds of further education colleges situated throughout the UK, the spectrum of choice ranges from cosmopolitan city-centre campuses to smaller country towns where the way of life is more relaxed and in many ways more

typically 'British'.

The diversity of life in the UK means that you can create your own set of friends and enjoy a lifestyle that best suits your needs. Of course, your new surroundings will all seem strange at first, and even your college environment and study life will probably be very different from what you're used to.

Your new accommodation may seem strange too! It is likely you will either share a home with a British family and possibly another student - or you will live on the college campus in halls of residence.

Living with a family means you will experience home life in the UK at first hand. In 'halls', you will be more independent and have more opportunities to mix socially with other students. In both cases, you will have your own study/bedroom, whilst amenities like the bathroom, lounge areas and so on are shared.

You could of course rent your own accommodation, but you have to weigh the advantages of independence against social isolation and loneliness. Alternatively, you could arrange to live with people from your own background, but then you probably wouldn't learn as much about the British way of life.

Mixing with the local community by joining sports and leisure clubs, doing voluntary work and other local activities are excellent ways of meeting new friends and developing new interests. This social interaction will help to improve your knowledge of the English language and culture - and it will of course increase your enjoyment of life in the UK and influence the success of your studies.

Leisure opportunities are endless in the UK. From city centre shopping and night-life to country pursuits and every possible sports activity - you can easily meet and keep new friends as an overseas student.

Travel within the UK - and abroad to the attractions of Ireland and the rest of Europe - is relatively cheap and convenient. First class road and rail connections, together with low-rate student fares on many services, make it easy to see the fascinating historical and cultural sights the country has to offer.

In short, studying in the UK comes with the extra and exciting dimension to be found in its culture, people and places.

sub: **"Study for a better future
- UK courses are excellent value for money"**

The UK's long-standing tradition of academic excellence is recognised throughout the world. Qualifications gained in the UK are regarded as a passport to success for the many overseas students who pass through the country's 600-plus further education colleges every year.

The quality of UK education is maintained by an unrivalled system of quality assurance and academic audits. High success rates and low drop-out rates among overseas students stem directly from programmes of closely supervised study in an intellectually and culturally stimulating environment. Close contact between staff and students and an emphasis on student welfare ensures that individuals enjoy maximum emotional support.

Further education in the UK provides value for money by offering shorter, more intensive courses than are available in many other countries. This reduces living expenses and time spent away from home.

It should be said, however, that for students who aren't familiar with the UK education system and whose English language capabilities fall short of working standards, it may be preferable to take the longer, less intensive route to success.

For most international students, money is a priority. By drawing up a financial plan and asking a short-list of colleges how much they charge and what is - and is not - included in their fees, the expense can be minimised.

It is important to compare the total of tuition fees, accommodation costs and living costs (which will be higher in places like London, Oxford and Cambridge). Find out if there are any extra expenses such as text books or examination fees.

Remember that embarking on a course of further education is a major investment of both time and money. For the best long-term returns, all the facts point to the UK.

For more information on Further Education in the UK, contact your local British Council office.

(BRITISH COUNCIL LEAFLETS -
ACCESS COURSES)

ACCESS COURSES IN THE UK

"A popular alternative to prepare for the degree or diploma of your choice"

For overseas students who may not have the required formal qualifications for entry into further or higher education in the UK, Access Courses are a popular way to bridge the gap. They are particularly attractive as an alternative to A-levels.

Courses are available at many further education colleges throughout the UK, either on a full or part-time basis and usually over a one-year period. They can be subject-specific, enabling you to go on directly to a degree in law, electronics or any other single subject. Alternatively, some students prefer the more general courses in subject areas such as the humanities.

One of the great benefits of Access Courses is that in many cases they prepare you for direct entry to the degree or diploma course of your choice. If they are linked to a specific degree programme, a student will normally be guaranteed a place at the college or university offering that course (upon successful completion of the Access Course).

Access Courses at Henley College, Coventry

The international access programme at Henley College offers Access Courses in business studies, communication, hotel management and law. Each course is linked to a UK university and all successful students are automatically offered a place at the university. Business studies students, for example, will be linked with degree programmes at Coventry University, whilst law students progress to one of four UK universities.

It is always advisable before starting on an Access Course to find out whether it prepares you for entry to only one institution or to any college or university in the UK offering that subject. It is also important to check whether the course is accredited by a specific university or The Open College Federation. If you decide on a college in the independent sector, you should check that it is validated by the British Accreditation Council.

sub: Access Courses in action

As you would expect, each Access Course has a compulsory core content related to the subject being studied. Other modules are then chosen and integrated into the course, together with English language and extra support in

this area for international students.

In some colleges, additional formal qualifications such as A-levels can be taken alongside the main Access Course. This can be particularly useful in linked degree programmes where subjects such as law or business studies are to be studied.

Other useful subjects which may form part of Access Courses include research and study skills, keyboarding and information technology, as well as social and cultural programmes.

Now, there's another route into UK education...

ACCESS COURSES FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Access Courses have made entry to further and higher education in the UK easier for thousands of international students.

Access Courses bridge the gap between university and college academic entrance requirements by building on a student's previous experience and attainments.

Linked programmes mean that degree and diploma courses are now within the reach of many more overseas students who want to base their future careers on high quality UK qualifications.

Further information on Access Courses in the UK is available from your local British Council office.

(BRITISH COUNCIL LEAFLETS -
LEARNING ENGLISH IN THE UK)

LEARNING ENGLISH IN THE UK

"Choose the home of the world's Number One

language to learn the best quality English"

Nearly one billion people world-wide speak English. It's the language of business and science, the language of the world's leading economic powers, and the main language of the Internet.

Above all, for students intending to study subjects other than English in the UK, a thorough knowledge of the language is a pre-requisite to exam success.

Learning English in its home territory makes plenty of sense. After all, the UK is the place where the language is spoken and written with the highest levels of 'correctness'. When you've learnt English in the UK, you will be understood easily anywhere else in the world where English is used.

UK language schools and teaching methods are of the highest quality. In addition, you will be totally immersed in the language outside of college hours! As a student in the UK, it is likely you'll be living either with a host family or with fellow students on a college campus.

From socialising to shopping, your every word will be in English! Television, radio, newspapers, road signs - the language will be everywhere and in no time at all, you'll be thinking, and maybe even dreaming, in English!

sub: **English language schools**

Every year, over 500,000 people go to the UK to learn English. Their levels of fluency extend across the entire spectrum, as do the capabilities of the UK's language schools whose international reputation is beyond question.

There are three main types of English language school in the UK: independent schools, state colleges and the universities. The best source of information on these institutions is the British Council.

Not only does it have detailed lists on each type of language school; the Council is also responsible for carrying out regular inspections to ensure that standards are maintained. These cover teaching standards, as well as monitoring the teaching environment, accommodation, student welfare and advisory services.

Useful information is published by the British Council in booklets entitled: 'Studying and Living in Britain', the 'BASELT Handbook', and the 'ARELS Directory'. These detail the locations of language schools throughout the UK as well as explaining the types of courses and examinations offered; certificates and qualifications awarded; and the leisure and social opportunities available.

Other reliable sources of information on English language teaching in the UK are available from universities and further education colleges, private language

schools and boarding schools.

sub: **English language courses**

UK-based English language courses vary in level, intensity, duration and cost. Consulting a recognised language school will ensure that the course you join will be appropriate to your own level of ability.

Apart from General English courses and those specifically designed for adults or juniors, there are English courses aimed at business executives and those which concentrate on the application of English to various professions and job functions.

In addition, there are many people who study English in the UK so they too can become English teachers in their own country. Similarly, qualified overseas teachers enrol on refresher courses in the UK to update both their language skills and knowledge of British culture.

Courses can be either full or part-time, sandwich courses or the highly popular summer schools. Costs can range from around œ25 per week right up to œ2,000 according to the length and level of the course, the number of people in the group and the intensity of the teaching.

sub: **English language examinations**

Overseas students intending to study English in the UK can take the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) at centres in their own country to assess their capabilities in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

IELTS is also a useful gauge for those overseas students wishing to study in the UK for a degree or diploma taught in English. Various other tests and assessments are available through reputable linguistic and academic bodies, the details of which are available from the British Council.

sub: **Learn and live the language**

Choosing the location of where you will learn English is as enjoyable as finally finding yourself in the beautiful British countryside, in an historic town or a bustling cosmopolitan community.

There is so much geographical and cultural diversity in the UK. To say that the environment will stimulate and accelerate the learning process is an understatement. From your very first day, learning English in the UK will offer a

multitude of opportunities to see new sights and make new friends.

More information on learning English in the UK is available from your local British Council office.

Train in the UK for HAIRDRESSING & BEAUTY THERAPY

With UK qualifications in Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, overseas students can be confident that they have received training which is among the best in the world.

At further education colleges across the UK, there is a very high standard of teaching, accommodation and resources. What is more, there are several international examination bodies which are based in Britain and whose qualifications many colleges use.

The better known awarding bodies include City & Guilds, CIBTAC and the Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT).

A combined Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy course normally takes three years. Hairdressing takes one or two years, whilst a Beauty Therapy course lasts two years. The qualifications are an end in themselves and do not require any further college training.

Course entrance requirements vary, although a good standard of English language is essential. No previous experience is necessary, but students should have covered biology or physiology in their school education. This is more important for Beauty Therapy which requires a more detailed knowledge of the body and its functions.

Both Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy are highly practical and training will involve a lot of time in the salon. All approved colleges in the UK have well-equipped salons, many of which are open to the public and run as businesses. Indeed, it is the close link between theory and practice which is the key to success in this field.

sub: **Quality training standards**

High standards of training are essential in the business of personal image making. This is all too obvious to both employers and students who intend to succeed in what is a highly competitive service industry.

To this end, all UK courses and colleges are inspected on a regular basis. Qualifications form part of the highly successful National Vocational Qualifications framework where the standards applied are determined by employers who help to ensure that the course content relates to skills required in the outside world.

sub: **Practical help for overseas students**

Staff at UK colleges are friendly and welcoming. From the moment you are met at the airport, you will find that support is available whatever your needs might be.

The college will have a Student Services Unit which provides general information about accommodation, fees, general costs and generally finding your way around.

You will be given a personal tutor for your course who will help with your academic needs such as English language support, using the library, teaching matters, assessment methods and so on.

Finally, there will be someone who acts on behalf of all the college's international students. They will organise social programmes, help if you are homesick in the early days, and help you to keep in touch with your family at home.

Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

HAIRDRESSING & BEAUTY THERAPY TRAINING

The UK has a long-established reputation as a leading international centre for Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing. Its colleges are renowned as centres of excellence providing innovative courses and teaching the most up-to-date styles and techniques.

Train in the UK for

HOSPITALITY & HOTEL MANAGEMENT

The UK boasts some of the finest hotels and restaurants in the world and has an international reputation for the quality of its training in this field.

UK training methods have been used as examples of good practice in many other countries, whilst the country's colleges and universities provide first-class work experience through strong international links.

Overseas students who gain UK qualifications and experience will therefore give their career prospects a major boost.

A wide variety of courses is available at colleges and universities throughout the UK. These range from basic catering diplomas to degrees in hotel management. In all cases, there is a strong emphasis on practical knowledge.

Course subjects fall into two broad areas: catering and hotel management. Catering concentrates on food preparation and cookery, food service and hygiene, bakery and confectionery. Hotel management includes subjects such as housekeeping, finance, marketing and reception. Some courses specialise in one main aspect, whilst many provide a thorough overall training.

Entry requirements vary, but a good general education including English language competence is expected. Courses emphasise practical skills and work experience. Students are therefore assessed on their work in hotel, kitchen and restaurant environments.

sub: **Quality training standards**

Training in this area has to be of the highest standards to meet the ever-growing expectations of customers. The UK government has extremely demanding requirements for quality training and all courses are subject to careful external assessment.

For students, this means qualifications which have been tested in the work-place as well as in the classroom, and qualifications which have international recognition and status.

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Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for Hospitality and Hotel Management is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

HOSPITALITY & HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

A UK qualification in hotel and catering operations is universally recognised as meeting the most rigorous quality standards. In a highly competitive international industry, the status of a UK qualification is sure to enhance an individual's future career.

UK training for a career in TOURISM & LEISURE

This rapidly growing sector of the UK economy has created a wide range of career opportunities. The growth of tourism in particular is a world-wide phenomenon and an area where overseas students can benefit greatly from the training expertise available in the UK.

Further education colleges have responded to the growth in this sector by offering an extensive choice of courses in all aspects of the tourism and leisure industry. Students also benefit from the links which colleges have with employers in the sector, and the opportunities which exist to visit and work in Europe.

Courses at various levels are offered under the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) system and are assessed and certified by BTEC or City & Guilds. They usually last one or two years and involve some work experience. Entry requirements include a good general education plus an acceptable level of English language competence.

Various subjects can be studied including sports, the travel industry, hotels and conferencing, together with general aspects of tourism and leisure such as marketing and promotion, customer service and so on. Assessment is mainly through essays, projects and tests.

sub: **Quality training standards**

The high performance of staff is vital in a sector which is so dependent on customer attitudes. Top quality training provision helps to guarantee that performance through a system which has an international reputation for excellence. The recently introduced NVQ training structure has proved to be one of the most effective systems in the world.

Most courses available at UK colleges are controlled by extensive quality control procedures overseen by both the government and by bodies which award qualifications such as BTEC or City & Guilds. These procedures help to ensure that overseas students in particular receive high quality training in the UK.

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Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for a career in Tourism & Leisure is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

TOURISM & LEISURE TRAINING

Career opportunities in this sector look set to grow throughout the world and well into the next millennium. Few countries can offer overseas students the quality of training that is available in the UK, with the rewards that is likely to bring.

Training in the UK for ART & DESIGN

The UK's creativity in Art and Design is respected throughout the world. From fashion to graphic design, from photography to ceramics, fine art and much more, the UK derives much of its strength from a practical approach, often with a distinct commercial edge. Its rich cultural heritage and a lively contemporary scene mean that the UK is ideally placed to provide overseas students with a superb educational experience.

Art and Design qualifications are available from a wide range of colleges covering a broad spectrum of subjects. These include colour and composition, how the world of Art and Design works, and practical skills like working to budgets and timescales, whilst many courses include practical experience working alongside practising artists and designers.

sub: **Quality training standards**

The structure for Art and Design education is controlled at national level. Standards will therefore be very similar at all UK colleges.

BTEC is the leading examination body offering two-year National and Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in the major Art and Design subjects. The HND is internationally recognised as a top qualification in this profession. City & Guilds is another prominent awarding body, whilst some universities offer degrees in theoretical aspects of the arts.

All colleges must maintain the highest levels of teaching and support services or they will not be allowed to continue.

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Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for a career in Art and Design is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

ART & DESIGN TRAINING

The opportunities for an exciting career in this field are almost endless. Given the training and the stimulating artistic and commercial environment in the UK, overseas students will be impressed by the enabling atmosphere that has seen so many practising designers achieve prominence.

Train in the UK for COMPUTING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The UK stands alongside the USA as one of the world's leaders in technological research and innovation.

By studying in the UK, overseas students will be at the heart of the IT revolution. With so many exciting challenges on the horizon, UK colleges and universities are well placed to help students realise their full potential and go on to a highly successful career.

You can be assured that UK colleges have well qualified staff and up-to-date equipment. The diploma courses offered provide a clear progression to a university and a choice of degree programmes.

Depending on their ability, students will need either one year or two to prepare for the university course. It is also important to have English language competence and at least a basic working knowledge of word-processing, databases and spreadsheets.

Some colleges have a one-year Access Course to prepare overseas students for degree courses in computer-related subjects.

sub: **Quality training standards**

The pre-university diploma courses offered by UK further education colleges have their curriculum, their teachers and their resources determined by central government.

It has done this since the late 1980s when the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was appointed to design the content and standards for all vocational education programmes from basic level to degree standard.

The UK now has a vocational education structure which is among the best in the world. NCVQ qualifications have international recognition and demonstrate a certain level of competence in their field.

The government also maintains quality in colleges by ensuring that they are independently inspected every four years to ensure their education systems and organisation are in good order. Overseas students can be confident therefore that the education they receive in the UK will be of the highest quality.

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Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for a career in Computing & Information Technology is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

COMPUTING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

For generations, the UK has produced many of the world's leading scientists. Today, in the midst of the information technology age, this continues to be true. The country's reputation stems in part from an innovative approach to problem solving. Equally, it is the depth and quality of the UK education system which ensures the continuity of a great technological tradition.

Train in the UK for BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT STUDIES

It is important to consider the dynamic context in which overseas students study business and management subjects in the UK.

Britain is probably the leading centre for banking and finance in the world and also one of the world's leading economies. It is a leading member of the European Union and has excellent access to the business communities of Europe.

Within the UK itself, there is a thriving mixed economy comprising manufacturing, retail, commercial and, of course, financial sectors - all of which provides a unique and relevant backdrop to the many Business and Management Studies courses available in the UK. These include the full range of business, finance, marketing and management studies. UK universities offer excellent management programmes including MBAs, whilst further education colleges provide effective access routes to further study.

There are many aspects to Business and Management Studies in the UK. Of the diverse range of courses available through colleges, some are run by well-known examining bodies such as BTEC and RSA, while others are managed by professional associations such as the Chartered Institutes of Banking, Marketing and Management whose roles include training and controlling standards in their profession.

Students need to find out what each course involves and whether it will be suitable for them. In some cases, a specific period of relevant work experience is required.

A more straightforward route to a degree or professional qualification is through one of the many high quality Access Courses. These are one-year courses with a general content where successful completion will provide entry to a number of universities.

Entry requirements for Access Courses usually specify English language competence and a good standard of educational achievement in the student's home country. Work experience may also be an advantage. In colleges where Access Courses are not available, students may pursue a two-year alternative: the GNVQ Advanced Diploma in Business.

sub: **Quality training standards**

Although business education in the UK comprises many courses and qualifications, the curriculum and general standards are controlled through the central government's Department for Education and Employment, mainly through the National Vocational Qualifications structure.

In addition, the main examining bodies have their own quality assurance programme to ensure that the work of students and the teaching and support services are acceptable. The government also maintains the quality of management, resources and teaching in colleges by ensuring that they are independently inspected every four years.

Most colleges also have advisory committees made up of businessmen from the local community who ensure that course content reflects the needs of local business.

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Further information on the benefits of training in the UK for a career in Business and Management is available from your local British Council office.

(Secondary caption:)

BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT STUDIES TRAINING

The gradual shift in the UK economy to the financial, retail and service sectors, allied to rapid developments in computer technology, mean that students are now living in exciting times. They are on the threshold of new opportunities for which today's training in the UK will equip them handsomely.

ENDS

http://www.buzzwords.ltd.uk/education_sector_copywriter.htm