





**ADULT
EDUCATION**

PART OF SOUTH ESSEX COLLEGES GROUP

WWW.SOUTHESSEX.AC.UK/ADULTS




GUIDE FOR MATURE STUDENTS



“Going back to education really develops your creativity, is life changing in that you get to specialise in a subject that you really love, and you get to meet friends for life. It helps you progress to a great career.”

Andy Wyatt, Animator



There are many reasons to become a mature student, they include:

- Enhance your career and employability prospects by upskilling
- A total career change – to a job you have always dreamed of or returning to employment after a period of not working such as after having children
- Improve your self-confidence by either revisiting a subject you once loved or by taking on a completely new one
- Be inspired by meeting new, like-minded people

GUIDE FOR MATURE STUDENTS

RETURNING TO STUDY AFTER A LONG GAP CAN BE DAUNTING.

At South Essex Colleges Group we understand the challenges facing mature students and can offer you the help and support you need to gain the qualifications that will help you make a brighter future. For the purpose of this guide mature learners are classed as anyone who is 19 or over.

WHY RETURN TO STUDY?

Your decision to return to education will depend on your goals, aspirations and whether further studies can provide something that meets your needs.

WHY CHOOSE SOUTH ESSEX COLLEGES GROUP?

Whether you are already armed with qualifications or have left school with very few, we have a course to meet your needs. We offer a huge range of courses including home learning courses, work-based learning, vocational diplomas and higher education programmes including degrees. We also offer a range of courses that are **completely FREE**.

When you study with us you'll get dedicated guidance from your tutors and our specialist support teams. Support does not end with your current course. We also support you towards your future. Our student services team are on hand to help you with nationwide university applications.

CAN I AFFORD TO RETURN TO STUDY?

There is no need to worry about how you are going to pay for your course as there may be financial support available to you. Fee waivers of up to 100% are available, depending on circumstances such as your age and household income.

WHAT FURTHER EDUCATION COURSES ARE AVAILABLE AT SOUTH ESSEX COLLEGES GROUP?

Part-time courses

Courses to help you learn the skills to advance or change your career. Whether you want to retrain for a career in beauty, accounting or hospitality we may have a course for you.

I-Study courses (online)

FREE* online courses you can study anywhere with an internet connection. These courses are available in a range of subjects including business and administration, caring for children and young people, counselling skills and data protection and data security.

Work-based Learning

Courses for learners already in full-time employment. These courses are available in a range of subjects include early years, assessing vocational achievement, and social care.

FREE Courses for the unemployed

Our FREE*** i-learn courses for the unemployed are available in a range of subjects including accounting, forklift driving, basic IT, office skills, childcare, security and health and social care. Visit our website for details on the full list of courses.

FREE Adult Functional Skills Maths and English

If you do not already hold a C grade (grade 4 in the new grading system) at GCSE or a Functional Skills level 2 qualification, our English and maths courses will be FREE**

EFL, ESOL AND IELTS 27

English language lessons.

Leisure courses such as part-time evening and weekend courses are not currently available but you can find lots of great subjects at your local Adult Community learning facility.

Access to Higher Education courses

Access courses are designed for people who have been out of education for some time. These courses provide you with a good foundation for studying at university level. Completing an access course will ensure that you are confident and well prepared to go on to study a degree. The Access to Higher Education Diploma is widely recognised by universities and is a full level 3 qualification. Examples of other level 3 qualifications include A-levels and BTEC Extended Diplomas.

We offer a range of Access courses in the following:

Art & Design

Health Science Professionals (online)

Nursing & Midwifery (on campus or online)

Psychosocial

Science

*One free course available in each subject area, studying two courses in the same subject area will incur a cost.

** You must be living in the UK or an EU country for three or more years prior to starting the course for it to be free.

*** Free if in receipt of certain unemployment benefits
Please call on 01702 220409
to check your eligibility.

“I would recommend the Early Years degree to anyone interested in working with young children, I liked it so much that my mum is now in the first year of the course! The course is very hands-on and the small class sizes mean that you get a lot of one-to-one training and can build up a great rapport with your tutors. You are always fully supported.”

Lauren Dolphin, Early Years Degree Graduate

LEVELS EXPLAINED

The world of education is constantly changing so the following is a guide to what used to be called GCSEs or A levels.

Entry Levels, 1, 2 & 3

Entry levels are for beginners and ideal for anyone who wishes to gain a basic knowledge of a subject / study area. There are no formal entry requirements for these levels.

Level 1

A Level 1 course is the first fundamental step to gaining knowledge in a profession, job or industry. Students must demonstrate the ability to study at a Level 1 in English and maths.

Level 2

These intermediate courses require students to be working at Levels 1-2 in English and maths, depending on individual subject areas. Perfect for progression from a Level 1 course or for students who are not quite ready for a Level 3.

Level 3

Level 3 courses are for students who are looking to advance their education for employment and personal development. These qualifications are a gateway to higher education. Entry requirements are to have English and maths at Level 2 or GCSE English and maths at grade 4 (C grade).

Levels 4/5

These levels are the first steps into higher education. Levels 4 and 5 are needed for specific professional careers, or will enable you to move into management roles.

Level 6

- Degree apprenticeship
- Degree with honours - for example bachelor of the arts (BA) hon, bachelor of science (BSc) hon
- Graduate certificate
- Graduate diploma
- Level 6 award
- Level 6 certificate
- Level 6 diploma
- Level 6 NVQ
- Ordinary degree without honours

Level 7

- Integrated master's degree, for example master of engineering (MEng)
- Level 7 award
- Level 7 certificate
- Level 7 diploma
- Level 7 NVQ
- Master's degree, for example master of arts (MA), master of science (MSc)
- Postgraduate certificate
- Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE)
- Postgraduate diploma



WHAT WILL I NEED TO ENROL?

Proof of ID

- British Citizens: passport, driving licence full or provisional, birth certificate (excluding bank statement, etc)
- Non-British Citizens: in-date passport, residence permit, visa (excluding driving licence)
- National Insurance number

Other documents

- Proof of any previous or relevant qualifications
- Proof of income including and benefits
- Method of payment to cover any fees or deposits
- Proof of EHCP

FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING – WILL I HAVE TO PAY?

If I am in receipt of JSA, ESA or any other benefit?

Most Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 courses are funded. This does depend on each individual course. Please speak to a member of our funding team for more information.

If I am aged 19-23?

The exemption rule means you are entitled to full funding for your first Level 2 and Level 3 course. Entry Level or Level 1 courses first are also fully funded.

If I am aged 19 plus?

Your first full Level 2 course will be funded if you are unemployed, as will enrolment onto Entry Level or Level 1 courses. Most Level 2 courses are funded if you are in receipt of benefits or have low earnings, otherwise you maybe able to get a 50% discount bursary.

If I am aged 24 plus and require funding for certain Level 3 courses?

You can apply for the Advanced Learner Loan. The Advanced Learner Loan is the most common way to fund one of our Access to Higher Education courses.

FREE* Adult English and Maths Functional Skills courses

These courses are free if you do not already hold either GCSE at C grade or higher (grade 4 or higher) or a Functional Skills Level 2.

*Please contact our funding team at: funding@southessex.ac.uk
www.southessex.ac.uk/finance/fees-and-funding

None of this applies to me

There may be a percentage of the course fee waived. This depends on circumstances such as your income, age and employment status. If you have any other questions, you can contact one of our course advisers for more information on fees and funding.

admissions@southessex.ac.uk
or phone **0345 52 12345**



HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE SOUTH ESSEX

At University Centre South Essex we offer a range of high quality higher education courses that are validated by some of the UK's top institutions such as University of Arts London, University of East Anglia, Pearson, City & Guilds and the Open University.

Apply direct through the website: www.southessex.ac.uk/he/

We offer:

HNC - Level 4 and HND -Level 5

Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) are job-related qualifications. HNCs and HNDs reflect the requirements of professional organisations and meet the National Occupational Standards for each sector or industry. They are an ideal choice for students seeking a cost-effective, vocational pathway to higher education.

CertEd - Level 5

The Certificate in Education (Further Education and Skills Sector) is a Level 5 teaching qualification which has a teaching/training practice requirement.

PgCE - Level 6

The Professional graduate Certificate in Education is a teacher training programme that will gain you a teacher training certificate in the post-compulsory sector.

BA (Hons) - Level 6

A Bachelor of Arts, BA (Hons), is a bachelor's degree awarded for an undergraduate course or programme that follows a humanities curriculum.

BSc (Hons) - Level 6

A Bachelor of Science, BSc (Hons), is a bachelor's degree awarded for an undergraduate course or programme in science-based or technical studies.



HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

DO I HAVE TO PAY ANYTHING UP-FRONT?

No, you don't have to pay anything before you start your studies. Student loans are available to UK and EU students to cover tuition fees and are repayable only after you graduate and earn over the UK repayment threshold.

You can visit the following website for more information

www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance

For full information on how to apply please visit:

www.southessex.ac.uk/he/he-fees-and-funding

or if you have any questions you can email:

HEfinance@southessex.ac.uk

If you require further information on any issues regarding finance or feel you need to discuss your finances with an adviser please contact:

HEsupport@southessex.ac.uk
or phone **01702 220696**.

Please note If you already hold a higher education qualification when applying for entry to our higher education programmes you may not be eligible for further tuition loan funding. We strongly urge you to visit

www.gov.uk/browse/education/studentfinance or contact Student Finance England direct:
0845 300 50 90

To find out if you qualify, contact our higher education team by emailing:

admissions@southessex.ac.uk

For further information please visit:

www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login

NCS - NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

The National Careers Service (NCS) provides high quality, free and impartial careers advice, information and guidance. The NCS is available to anyone aged 13+ no matter what stage of the career's journey they are at. The NCS now offer weekly group information sessions.

All sessions include:

- Introduction to the National Careers Service (NCS) - What we do, our offer and how to access
- CV preparation, examples and 'Applicant Tracking Systems'

- Networking and job search
 - How to maximise your chances and potential
- The job market – opportunities, sectors and trends, General CV Group session for 25+
- Training and education opportunities, including Apprenticeships

Contact Us

To book a place for a customer, email **NationalCareersServiceNCC@futuresforyou.com** or telephone: **0800 100 900**

ADULT NETWORKING EVENTS

It is so important when exploring a new career to begin networking, building relationships with professionals in your chosen industry, finding out how they got into their current role and making your name known.

How to find networking events

Doing research and searching the web is a great way to find networking events in your local and surrounding areas. As well as checking your institution's website, the following websites are great when looking out for these events.

www.eventbrite.co.uk - Eventbrite is a global self-service ticketing platform for live experiences that allows anyone to create, share, find and attend events that fuel their

passions and enrich their lives. From music festivals, marathons, conferences, community rallies and fundraisers, to gaming competitions and air guitar contests.

www.excel.london - EXCEL London (an abbreviation for Exhibition Centre London) is an exhibition and international convention centre in the Custom House area of Newham, East London. Its 100-acre (0.40 km²) site is on the northern quay of the Royal Victoria Dock in London Docklands, between Canary Wharf and London City Airport.

Can't find an event you are looking for?

Speak with our designated career coaches and they will help you find your ideal event.

LINKEDIN

What will I need to enrol?

LinkedIn has become a popular platform for employers to go onto when looking for who they want to hire within their company, it is important when making a LinkedIn account to make it stand out and to keep active.

What is LinkedIn used for?

LinkedIn is a valuable resource for career and business professionals to network; obtain resources and support; and build relationships with potential customers, clients, and partners.

How do I get started?

To sign up for a free LinkedIn account (**gb.linkedin.com**) you'll need a professional sounding email address.

Once you have signed up, LinkedIn will guide you through the process of completing a profile. You'll appear in more searches and rank higher if you complete all sections of your profile.

To develop your LinkedIn profile and stand out to employers, you will need to:

- Upload a digital photograph – Look professional and have a clear background
- Create a headline – Who you are, what you do and what you want to be
- Write a summary – Write about yourself, your passions, where you see yourself in 5 years
- Add your work experience
- Show volunteering experience
- Add your skills
- Give details about your education

After you have set up your profile, you can then start to:

- Connect with people on LinkedIn – Connect with friends, family, colleagues and network
- Be active – Share good news, share posts about companies goals and achievements. Join groups related to the industry you want to go into

If you are interested in building a LinkedIn profile and would like some guidance, please email **careers@southessex.ac.uk** and a designated career coach will support you.

LOCAL CAREER SITES

It is always a good idea to check your local career websites and your local LMI (Labour Market Information) for opportunities within your local area, ranging from internships – apprenticeships.

Places to find this information for your area:

www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk - Living in the Thurrock area or surrounding this is a great place to visit to work within an industry, Thurrock opportunities offers placements in;

PRIORITY SECTORS

- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Logistics
- Retail
- Construction
- Social Care
- Creative & Cultural

www.essexopportunities.co.uk - Essex Opportunities is a one stop shop for information and advice on jobs, careers, skills and training. Funded by Essex County Council and Southend Borough Council this portal has everything you need to help build a career. Use this portal to search for jobs, courses and apprenticeships based in Essex!

www.southendconnexions.co.uk - Southend Connexions is a leading provider of Careers, information advice and guidance for young people in Essex. Our personal advisers can offer one to one information, advice, and guidance with...

Employability skills, course choices, vacancy information, exploring post school and college options, HE support.

www.southend.gov.uk/southendcareersservice - Southend Careers Service is a partnership of professional career guidance services offering you the best opportunities to access support in finding employment, education, or training. This is a free service.

Internal careers advice can be with our designation SEC-Career department, contactable though email **careers@southessex.ac.uk**

MEET THE CAREERS TEAM

At the South Essex Colleges Group we have a dedicated careers team, who support internal students, giving them information, advice and guidance on your career options and next steps you are looking to explore.

You can find a Careers Coach at the following locations:

- Luker Road – LRC
- Stephenson Road – LRC (by appointment)
- Luckyn Lane –Admissions Office 2nd floor (by appointment)
- Basildon New Campus – LRC (by appointment)
- Thurrock – West Reception

What do the careers team do?

Our qualified Career Coaches deliver one to one and group workshops in careers, information, advice and guidance (CIAG) to support a wide range of activities. The activities are designed to engage you with your career progression, enhancing opportunities for personal and skills development. The careers service supports students progression into education, training or work.

We offer;

- General careers interviews
- Employability guidance/ CV & Cover letter writing
- Education progression
- Apprenticeship/ traineeship/ internship advice
- Higher education/ UCAS/ Student finance support

How to contact the careers team

Telephone: 01702 220400

Email: careers@southessex.ac.uk

 CareersCoachSEC

 careerscoachessec

EMPLOYMENT

How to make your cv and cover letter stand out from the rest, learn about useful tips and tricks when it comes to interviews.

Find out about employment opportunities in your local area.

Simple But Effective Ways to Make Your CV Stand Out

Start strong. Start with a summary of your skills and key accomplishments. This will attract the recruiter and grab their attention from the outset.

Emphasise results rather than responsibilities. Instead of just listing your past responsibilities, make your CV stand out by emphasising your results, using quantifiable data to show your accomplishments.

Customise for the job you want. Respond directly to the job description and explain exactly why you are the candidate for the role.

Demonstrate that you are connected. Whether it be at university or in past job roles, you will have met an array of different people. Make sure this comes through.

Show industry insight. An awareness of the industry you are applying for will show the recruiter that you have the ability to stay on top of trends.

Use power words. Using power words will emphasise your accomplishments and will give your CV additional impact.

Need some help building a cv and cover letter? Email careers@southessex.ac.uk and a designated careers coach will guide you.

Useful websites and employment opportunities in your local area

The internet is one of the best places to start job searching, many employers now advertise online.

www.indeed.co.uk

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

www.reed.co.uk

www.monster.co.uk

www.gov.uk/find-a-job

www.cv-library.co.uk

www.totaljobs.co.uk

RETRAINING – CHANGE IN CAREER

You may be at a point in your life where you are looking to change your career or needing to retrain to explore a different career route.

Things to consider

During your working career you would have developed many transferrable skills and experience that will support you in exploring alternative career opportunities. Although you may be required to start in a lower position that you have been in previously, you will be able to demonstrate your worth and abilities that could allow you to progress quicker within the industry.

You may need to undertake qualification to equip you in being able to undertake your new career route. Explore your options is key to this. Could you look at an apprenticeship, training programmes or adult courses? Is there any financial support available to support you. A lot of adults do not realise that all of this is potentially available to you and worth exploring.

Financial it is likely that you are going to have to take a drop in your salary and for many this is a large factor into the decision that you will make. Again is it worth exploring the financial support that may be available to you. Along with considering if you can gain any qualifications prior to moving jobs. This may mean that you are able to gain a job which may pay a slightly

higher salary. Or look for a job similar job within the industry that you want to work within, and then you could explore side stepping into the desired position of your choice.

Not sure what to do next

You may think that completing a career quiz is only for school or college students. This is not the case. By completing a career quiz it will allow you to explore careers that you may not know existed or not had considered for yourself. Career quizzes take around 10 to 20 minutes and provides you with a list of jobs that you can then explore.

Recommended Career Quiz websites **www.sacu-student.com** or **www.prospects.ac.uk/planner**

Once you have completed a quiz, we always recommend that you research into the jobs. Explore Careers on the government website provides a vast amount of information regarding different jobs, including qualification you need, working hours, salary and core skills **www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers**

This will allow you to explore what job is really right for you and any retraining that you maybe needing to undertake.

APPRENTICESHIPS

An apprenticeship is a program that trains a worker to become skilled in a particular trade. Apprenticeships combine hands-on work with classroom learning to train the apprentice. Apprenticeships are considered full-time employment.

How apprenticeships work

On an apprenticeship, you're employed to do a real job while studying for a formal qualification - usually for one day a week either at a college or training centre. By the end of your apprenticeship, you'll hopefully have gained the skills and knowledge needed to either succeed in your chosen career or progress onto the next apprenticeship level.

What you'll learn depends on the role that you're training for. However, apprentices in every role follow an approved study programme, which means you'll gain a nationally-recognised qualification at the end of your apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship levels

There are four different levels of apprenticeship:

- Intermediate - equivalent to five good GCSE passes.
- Advanced - equivalent to two A-level passes.
- Higher - equivalent to the first stages of higher education, such as a foundation degree.
- Degree - comparable to a Bachelors or Master's degree.

Age limit

There's no upper age limit on being an apprentice. As long as you're over 16 and have the right credentials, you'll be eligible to apply for your chosen apprenticeship. If you start your apprenticeship after you turn 19, you may be entitled to additional government funding.

Entry Requirements

To apply for an intermediate apprenticeship, you'll just need to be over 16 years old and no longer in full-time education.

For an advanced apprenticeship, you're likely to be asked for prior work experience and at least three 9-4 grade GCSEs or equivalent - such as an intermediate apprenticeship qualification.

As higher apprenticeships are the equivalent of a foundation degree, HNC or first year of a Bachelors, you'll usually need at least five 9-4 grade GCSEs, as well as some Level 3 qualifications in relevant subjects, to apply. Your Level 3 qualifications could be AS-levels, a BTEC National or a Level 3 NVQ.

Degree apprenticeships will have the tightest entry requirements. These may include three A-levels in a specified grade range or a higher apprenticeship qualification, on top of at least five 9-4 GCSE grades. It's also likely you'll be required to have prior work experience.

For more information email:

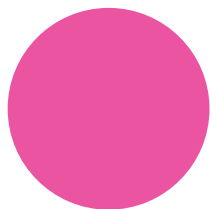
apprenticeships@southessex.ac.uk

IMPORTANT CAREERS EVENTS

The careers team put on events throughout the academic year to support students in exploring their options within further education, apprenticeships, careers and more. Each campus will have their own what's on posters with all events including career events on them, these are updated on a monthly basis, so make sure when in campus to keep a look out for these to keep updated with all events happening, these are located around the lift areas.

Event	Date
Welcome to college	Term 1
UCAS Workshop and Support	Term 1
National Apprenticeship Week	Term 2
National Careers Week	Term 2
Progression	Term 2 & 3

Refer to Tutor or Careers Team for more details and what's happening at your campus.





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southessex.ac.uk/adults

0345 52 12345



<https://forms.office.com/e/syDtpkCEAy>

For more information contact:

Careers@southessex.ac.uk

