



Training & Education

Education

There are many educational opportunities within Cornwall and there is probably a course to suit most people's interests. You are never too old to start a course and they can be a great way to learn a new skill, gain qualifications, pursue a hobby, improve your chances of finding work and meet new people.

Qualifications explained

Generally every time you do a new qualification you want to be going up a level, unless you are starting an entirely new subject, or you have been out of education for a while and need to refresh your skills.

Level 1: these are introductory courses and are the equivalent of GCSE/O levels at grades D-G (now 3 to 1 for new style GCSE grading)

Level 2: these are equivalent to GCSE/O levels at grade C and above. (4 to 9 for new style GCSE grading)

Level 3: are equivalent to A levels, these are necessary if you are thinking about going to University

Level 4: A Higher Education qualification such as a Higher National Diploma/Certificate, Foundation Degree or equivalent

Level 5: The equivalent of an Honours Degree

Part-time courses

If you only have a few hours to spare it might be worth considering a part time course. These are often delivered at community venues and cover a wide variety of subjects from Art to Zumba and everything in between. Part-time courses are a great way to try out a new topic or skill without committing yourself to studying for lots of hours, they can also be a good way to build your confidence if you have been out of education for a while and feel a little rusty.

If you are interested in finding a part time course, why not try:

Adult Education:

Tel: 0300 1231 117 <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/adult-and-community-education/>

Link into Learning:

Tel: 0300 1231 117 <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/adult-and-community-education/> (specialists in adult literacy, numeracy and IT)

Truro & Penwith College: Tel: 01872 305000 www.truro-penwith.ac.uk

Cornwall College Group Tel 0330 123 2523 www.cornwall.ac.uk

Full-time courses

It might be that you have more time and would like to study full-time; again there are many course options you could consider. If you are aged 16-20 a full-time course is considered to be 12 hours or more. For older students a full-time course is thought to be 16 hours or more a week, though this could still leave enough space in your week to work part-time if needed.

Most full-time courses are offered by local further Education Colleges or Universities. However some schools with post-16 learning centres may also consider taking adult students.

To see what courses are available locally you could consider:

Truro & Penwith College

Tel: 01872 305000 or 01736 809000 www.truro-penwith.ac.uk

Cornwall College Group

Tel: 0330 123 2523 www.cornwall.ac.uk

UCAS (for higher education courses)

www.ucas.com

Flexible learning

It is also possible to learn flexibly using distance learning. Probably one of the most well-known distance learning providers is the Open University but there are many other colleges that offer this too.

Open University www.open.ac.uk

National Extension College www.nec.ac.uk

Although distance-learning can seem an attractive option it is not necessarily cheap, so do your research, work out your costs and apply for any available funding

Funding

Courses are normally free as long as you start a course before your 19th birthday.

You also will not have to pay if you are 19-23 years old and you do not already have a full level 2 or level 3 qualification and there is no charge for Adult Basic Skills courses (English and Maths).

Fees for some courses may be waived if you are unemployed and claiming certain means-tested benefits.

You might be able to apply for a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan or a Professional and Career Development Loan. If you study an Access to Higher Education course you might need to get a loan to pay the course fees but if you go on to complete a degree you will not have to repay the Access course loan.

Higher Education students will normally need to take out a Student Loan except when they are eligible for an NHS Bursary or if they get sponsorship from an employer or organisation. If you have an impairment / disability you may also be able to claim the Disabled Students' Allowance whilst you are at University. More information is available here:

<http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/grants-education>

<https://www.gov.uk/grant-bursary-adult-learners>

[National Union of Students UK \(nus.org.uk\)](http://nus.org.uk)

Training

You may be thinking of doing a Training course, which often involves learning a work-related skill.

As well as the local colleges you can complete training courses at Training Centres and as part of work-based learning. Sometimes the courses are short, stand-alone certificates such as Food Hygiene Certificates; others can be long term, such as Apprenticeships.

More information:

Access Training Tel: 01726 77600 www.accesstraining.co.uk

National Careers Service Tel: 0800 100900 <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>