

Access to Higher Education Diploma

Pathways offered:

- **Health & Social Science
(Human Biology & Psychology)**
OR:
- **Humanities & Social Science
(Criminology & Psychology)**



Course Information
Start: September 2021

ACCESS TO H.E. APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Monday 12th April 2021: The Access to HE application form will be available on our website:

<http://www.aquinas.ac.uk/adulteducation/access-higher-education-diploma/>

You can save the form to your computer and complete it electronically. The form can then be emailed, printed off and posted or handed into Aquinas College Adult Education reception.

Post to: Aquinas College Adult Education
Nangreave Road
STOCKPORT
SK2 6TH

Email to: sheila.lahan@aquinas.ac.uk

Once received the application form is considered by course tutors and a letter will be sent to either invite you for interview/assessment or to suggest an alternative course.

Applications will be accepted from: Monday 12th April to Friday 27th August 2021, (or until we have filled all available places which may be earlier). Late Applications received after the 27th August will **only** be accepted if there are still places available. If there are no places, you will be held on a pending list until mid-September.

How do we assess your suitability for a course?

Once your application has been received, you will be asked to attend an interview:

- To discuss the course further and demonstrate to the course tutor/advisor that you have the commitment and skills necessary to successfully complete the course.
- Copies of your GCSE English, Maths & Science certificates will need to be seen for photocopying.
- You may be asked to complete Initial Assessments in literacy and/or numeracy at this interview. The completion and results of the assessment(s) ensure you receive the correct advice and guidance.

You will be advised before you leave college whether you are being offered a place and given a date to return to enrol during the month of August when you will be given starting information.

Academic courses delivered at Aquinas College are subsidised by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and also partly by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (this includes Advanced Learner Loans), where funding is available.



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What is Access to Higher Education?

Our Access programmes are a one year part-time course, designed for over 19's who may have been out of education for a while and would like another opportunity to study. If you are from a forces background you could be very well suited to the structure and focus required for Access to HE especially if you have had to leave the forces early and need a new direction plus new qualifications to achieve that.

Access to H.E Diploma is an accepted alternative to 'A' levels and is recognised by universities for admission onto a range of degree courses.

Over 80% of our former learners who complete an Access to Higher Education Diploma have progressed onto degree programmes for subjects such as: nursing, biology, physiotherapy, paramedic training, biology, nutrition, forensic psychology, criminology, social work courses and psychology. Following completion of the degree students have then successfully progressed onto their career path.

With the introduction of our new pathway, you could go onto degrees in: criminology, social care/work, psychology, and policing.

The pathways offered at Aquinas College are:

Human Biology & Psychology (**Health & Social Science**)

Criminology & Psychology (**Humanities & Social Science**)

As part of the course, you will study **Core Skills units**, designed to make the return to education less stressful and more enjoyable.

PLEASE NOTE: The Award of the Access to Higher Education Diploma does not guarantee entry into University (see page 7 for entry requirements).

How much time do I have to put in?

Subject attendance

We run 144 subject classes per academic year held on Monday and Tuesday evenings from 5.30pm to 9.00pm. **The first half-hour of many classes are devoted to 'one-to-one' tutorials with personal tutors.** These are arranged on an appointment basis. So effectively, unless you have a tutorial appointment, you need to attend from 6pm -9pm each week. **At least 80% attendance is required to achieve the Access Diploma,** though we would expect very little absence from class. As well as attending classes you are expected to put in at least **8 hours of private study per week.** This is very often taken up with reading.

What is the content of each pathway?

Health & Social Science:

Human Biology units:

Psychology units:

Unit Title	Unit level	Credit value	Unit Title	Unit level	Credit value
Body Defences	3	3	Stereotyping, Prejudice & Discrimination	3	3
Coordination & Control	3	3	Social Influence & Independence	3	3
Exchange & Transport of Gases	3	3	Aggression	3	3
Human Reproduction	3	3	Concepts of Normality & Mental Health	3	3
Organisation of the body	3	3	Psychological Perspectives	3	3
Diet & Digestion	3	3	Non-Verbal Communication	3	3
The Cell	3	3	The Nature-Nurture Debate	3	3
Homeostasis	3	3			

Humanities & Social Science:

Criminology units:

Psychology units:

Unit Title	Unit level	Credit value	Unit Title	Unit level	Credit value
Criminological Practice	3	3	Stereotyping, Prejudice & Discrimination	3	3
Criminological Statistics	3	3	Social Influence & Independence	3	3
The Criminology of Prisons	3	3	Aggression	3	3
Theories of Crime Causation	3	3	Concepts of Normality & Mental Health	3	3
Socio-biological explanations of crime	3	3	Psychological Perspectives	3	3
Offender Profiling	3	3	Non-Verbal Communication	3	3
Sociological Explanations of crime	3	3	The Nature-Nurture Debate	3	3
			Personality Theory	3	3

Developmental Skills:

As well as gaining credits in the subject areas shown above, the programme offers a number of developmental skills that are gained as a requirement of the course. These are outlined below. Achievement of developmental skills credits, alongside subject credits, go towards the award of the Access Diploma. Research and Practical units are done within your subject classes.

Health & Social Science:

Developmental Skills		
Unit Title	Unit level	Credit Value
Communication: Academic Essay Writing	3	3
Biological Molecules	3	3
Study Skills: Research Practical Research for Psychology	3	3

Humanities & Social Science:

Developmental Skills		
Unit Title	Unit level	Credit Value
Communication: Academic Essay Writing	3	3
Using Research Skills	3	3
Study Skills: Research Practical Research for Psychology	3	3

Exemption:

You may be exempt from the core skills shown below if you hold the equivalent qualification shown, (**certificates** will need to be seen **at your first interview**): **All learners must ensure they pass or prove exemption for both Communication & Use of Number units.** If for some reason exemption cannot be proven, these two units are handed out in 'take away packs' and can be completed at home; you will be given deadlines for completion.

Core Skills	Exemption awarded if you have:	Unit level	Credit Value
Communication: Punctuation & Grammar	English GCSE Grade 'C' (4) or above	2	3
Use of Number: Data Handling	Maths GCSE Grade 'C' (4) or above	2	3

	<i>No of units</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Credit value</i>
<i>Main subject units:</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Developmental units:</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Core skills:</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Total Credits earned:</i>			<i>60</i>

How is the programme assessed?

Each term (there are three per year) you will complete written work - essays, reports, comprehensions. There will also be opportunities to deliver seminar presentations, carry out research, compile portfolios and do laboratory work (Health pathway). You will receive detailed feedback and will gain credits for skills demonstrated related to subject areas and core skills.

Throughout the year you will also be given timed assessments. Each assessment you pass will be handed in and as you progress through the course these will build into a portfolio for the examination board.

How many credits do I need to achieve?

You may find it useful to know *how many credits* you will accumulate during the course, and *at what level*. This information will also be of interest to the H.E. institution you are applying to. Completion of all subject and core skills assignments yields **60 credits - 54 at Level 3 and 6 at Level 2** – a requirement to achieve the full Access Diploma (as detailed on pages 5 and 6).

Access Units

The Access Diploma is designed around Units which set out assessment criteria for all subject and core areas. Copies of these units for your subjects will be available during the induction to the course.

Grading System:

Grades are awarded for level 3 units only and are available as 'Pass', 'Merit' and 'Distinction'. You **will not be given** a final/aggregate grade for overall performance. Grades will be subject to internal and external moderation processes and are NOT confirmed until the Final Awards Board has met at the very end of the course.

What are the entry requirements?

Grade 'C' (4) or above in GCSE English, Maths & Science, (essential entry requirements for University if going into nursing, midwifery – *see below).

You may be required to do Initial Assessments in literacy and/ or numeracy at interview to help us check your skills in order to receive the correct advice and guidance. Also, you will need to demonstrate to the course tutor/advisor that you have the commitment and skills necessary to successfully complete the course. It is not necessary to have any prior knowledge of any of the subject areas.

Applicants wishing to progress into higher education need to be aware that some higher education institutions (HEIs) may have additional entry requirements: (*e.g. for nursing at the local Universities:

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU- Adult Nursing):

- You will need: Five GCSEs at Grade C/grade 4. These should include your English Language and Mathematics at Grade C/4, plus evidence of IT skills.
- You must achieve 104-112 UCAS points following completion of the Access to HE course.

Salford University:

- You will need: GCSE English Language and Maths at grade C/grade 4 minimum (or equivalent).
- You must achieve 112 UCAS points following completion of the Access to HE course.

It is advisable to check with the HEIs to which you intend applying for their entry requirements, as this may require a longer period of study before you go to university (if for instance you do not have a GCSE in English and/or Maths at the grade required).

Applying for Access if English is not your first language:

For students whose first language is not English, you will be asked to complete a hand written English assessment, which will help us to place you on the correct course and identify any possible support needs that you may have. It is possible we would recommend you enrol onto an IELTS course prior to commencing Access. Required level: IELTS 7.0, with a minimum of 7.0 in reading, listening and speaking and 6.5 in writing

Fees and the Advanced Learner Loan

You will not have to pay course fees. If you are:

- **aged 19 – 23** (based on the date you start your course) and **do not** already have a level 3 qualification (4 x AS levels or 2 x A levels).

24+ regardless of your qualifications:

- **You will have to pay fees.** The fee for the 2021-22 academic year for both pathways will be : £2575.00
- (this includes registration with Open Awards, the awarding body).

You will have to pay your own fees if you are aged 19-23 and already have a level 3 qualification (this could be A level, level 3 technical etc. with 300 guided learning hours).

Likewise, if you are aged 24+ (based on the date you start your course), you will have to pay your own fees.

One option available to both age groups is to apply for an ***Advanced Learner Loan*** from the Student Loan Company - *further information about the Advanced Learner Loan is available upon request.* The maximum amount you can borrow on a loan is £3000 and the minimum is £300.

Advanced Learner Loan:

To take out an ***Advanced Learner Loan***, you have to have a **confirmed place** at college. In addition, the information below is relevant:

1. You can apply for an Advanced Learner Loan via the Student Finance England website:
<https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans/overview>
2. If your application for a Student Loan is accepted, your repayments are linked to income, so there will be nothing to pay until you earn more than £25,000. Rates of interest will vary depending on how much you earn but are generally lower than a high street loan, and any outstanding balance will be written off after 30 years.

If you use an ***Advanced Learner Loan*** to fund your Access to HE course, and progress onto HE (a degree) and complete your programme, **the Student Loan Company will write off the amount outstanding on the loan taken for the Access course.**

If you choose not to take out a loan, you have the option to pay fees in instalments or in full directly to the college - a deposit and up to 5 monthly payments by standing order will be required (details available on request).

Other costs/resources you may need to find:

Writing paper, pens, A4 ring binders or pocket wallets to store your assignments and other documents handed out by your tutor. All course textbooks are available to borrow as required from the Learning Centre in college. You may prefer to buy a small number of low cost textbooks. In addition, you will benefit from the use of a pc with word processing software and an internet connection.

What resources and guidance are available?

Learning Centre

Aquinas LC (Library, or Learning Centre) is well stocked for all Access subjects. You'll be given a full tour in the first few weeks of your programme. Information about H.E. Degree courses is available in the LC. Twilight opening times are Monday and Tuesday 5.00 pm until 7.30pm.

Tutorials

All learners are assigned a personal tutor who will meet with them to discuss progress. Additional meetings can be arranged whenever required. Your tutor will help you with your application to H.E.

Careers and Guidance

Appointments are available to discuss Careers and Guidance for all students attending the Aquinas Adult Education Department. We also have **student support** services for Access students who may need extra guidance with study planning, essay writing or maths.

ICT facilities

ICT drop-in facilities are free to all students between 5.00 pm and 9.00 pm Monday and Tuesday evenings. You can print out essays etc. There are ICT Technicians available from 5.30 pm Monday and Tuesday evening to help with 'logging in' to the college system etc.

Access notice board

Information for Access students is available on our **Access to H.E. Noticeboard**. All tutorial appointments appear here. Your tutor will advise you where this is placed and you need to check it weekly for notices. We sometimes post University Open Day events.

Refreshments

Refreshments are available on site.

All college facilities have disabled access.

Course information contact details:

Access Co-ordinator/Tutor	Graham Cowling	0161 419 3620	gicowling@yahoo.co.uk
Access Co-ordinator/Tutor	Ruth Hewitt	0161 419 3620	Ruth.hewitt@aquinas.ac.uk
Head of Adult Education	Emma Bradbury	0161 483 3237	emma.bradbury@aquinas.ac.uk
Assistant Head of Adult Education	Sheila Lahan	0161 419 3620 or 483 3237	sheila.lahan@aquinas.ac.uk
Aquinas College Adult Education Nangreave Road STOCKPORT SK2 6TH <u>www.aquinas.ac.uk/adulteducation</u> 0161 419 3620			

Academic results 2019/20

Course Title	Starters Overall	Ach Overall %	Completed Overall	Ret Overall %	Pass Overall %
Access Health/Criminology & Psychology	16	87.50	14	100	87.50

Which degree were our students accepted onto for 2019/20:

Health		Criminology	
Physiotherapy	1	Forensic Psychology	2
Midwifery	2	Psychology	1
Nursing	2	Social Work	1
Dental hygiene	1	Criminology	2
PG studies	1	Housing Development	1

What our students have said:

"I found the whole course to be both intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding; the effort invested ultimately yielding dividends as it became the springboard which propelled me towards studying at university. This was made possible, in no small part, by the fantastic support and encouragement from tutors and administrative staff alike; the readily available feedback was a great help, and made the completion of assignments a smoother process. If you put in the effort, you will get there."

"At first it seems there is so much to do and getting used to coming to college twice a week can be hard. But, once you have the first assignment out of the way and you get your feedback it encourages you to try harder and keep going".

"I found fitting in homework was very hard, what with looking after the children, my husband, shopping, cleaning and work! However I found planning my time helped immensely, a skill which would be needed if I go onto University anyway".

"They told me it was very intense when I enrolled and I don't actually think I really thought that much about it - just nodded and said I would be fine. In reality it is as described to me and I did panic for a while, but then I thought to myself that it's about accepting it and if it's what you want, then you have to make a sacrifice or two to get there".

The classes are fascinating with rich subject matter. The tutor relates very well to his students and is very approachable. I needed support from the start and I have received it - this gives and provides a great environment to learn in knowing people are willing to help.