Access FAQS and Essential Information

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What is Access?
This one-year, part-time course is for people who would like to go on to study for a degree but who do not have current, up-to-date qualifications. You must enrol on two appropriate Access subjects* related to the degree you would like to pursue.

*N.B. BSc Chemical Physics requires you to enrol on three subjects: Maths, Physics & Chemistry.

What Access subjects should I study?
Your choice of subject should be guided by two questions: what degree do I want to do after Access and what will I enjoy studying? Some degree courses have very specific requirements. Some degrees also have additional requirements (eg Teaching, Psychology) therefore it is essential that you check the entry requirements for the degree you wish to apply for and the university you wish to study at before you enrol on your Access subjects.

Do I need any previous knowledge to enrol for Access?
For most subjects, apart from Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics, you do not need any particular knowledge before starting Access, although you do have to be ready to start reading and writing in a fairly sophisticated way and should therefore have the necessary English language skills. If you intend to take Chemistry, Mathematics and/or Physics on Access it is strongly recommended that you have previous knowledge of Chemistry and/or Mathematics at an appropriate level such as Standard Grade Credit level, Intermediate 2, National 5, or GCSE.

If you do not have one of these qualifications, or are not sure what they mean, you can see previous years’ exam papers at http://www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm

It is strongly recommended that you have refreshed your knowledge and are prepared and ready to work at this level when Access starts, otherwise you are unlikely to be able to cope with the pace and content of the course.

If you are going to study Chemistry and/or Mathematics, you should be revising as follows:

For Chemistry, you should concentrate on: elements, compounds, basic bonding, chemical formula, chemical reactions, basic chemical equations and basic chemical calculations. Any of the "National 5 Chemistry" revision books published by Hodder and Gibson or Leckie and Leckie are very useful up to this level. BBC Bitesize for National 5 Chemistry is also very useful for revising up to the required level.

For Maths, you should concentrate on: numeracy (fractions, percentages, negatives, indices, surds, rounding, standard form), basic algebra (multiplying out brackets, collecting like terms, factorising, simplifying expressions), solving equations (linear, simultaneous) and graphs (plotting and interpreting). These topics are covered in "Countdown to Mathematics" by L Graham and D Sargent (BOTH vols. 1 and 2.). Second-hand copies are available for just a
few pounds from many sources. Additionally, some of our students have found the online videos from Khan Academy (http://khanacademy.org) and the BBC Bitesize material helpful.

**What will I have to do on Access?**
You will attend one class per week for each subject you are studying. Classes start in September and continue until the end of March with final exams taking place during April/May. Most classes last for two hours with the exception of Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Geology and Biology which are three hours. Classes take place during the day and/or the evening, dependent on subject (see the [timetable](#)).

**What if English is not my first language?**
To be able to cope on Access, you will need high level English language skills equivalent to one of the following:
- **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** Academic module (not General Training): overall score 6.0, with no single element less than 5.5
- **TOEFL**: 78; no sub-test less than 18
- **CAE** (Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English): Grade C
- **CPE** (Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English): Grade C
- **PTE Academic** (Pearson Test of English, Academic test): 54; no subtest less than 54
- **UK school qualifications in English** e.g. Intermediate 2, National 5 or preferably Higher in Scotland, (or GCSE in Northern Ireland, Wales and England) at B or better.

**Can I enrol on Access if I live in a country outside the UK?**
Access is not suitable for people resident outside the UK.

**How will I be assessed?**
You will have to complete coursework during the year (essays, short tests in the class, exercises, lab reports, etc., as appropriate to the particular subject) and sit a 60-minute examination at the end of the year for each subject. The exams are held under the conditions you can expect to find as an undergraduate student.

**Can I transfer my subjects?**
Once you have enrolled on Access, you cannot change subjects, so please ensure you choose the right subjects.

**How much time will I need to set aside for Access?**
It is always difficult to give a reliable answer to this question because it can vary a lot from person to person and will vary depending on the subject and when assignments or assessments are due. The number of credits for a course does, however, give you an idea of the necessary commitment. Each credit is equivalent to 10 hour of study which includes teaching time as well as individual learning. Students should therefore expect to dedicate 200 hours of study for each subject they are taking.
Is study support available?
Your tutors will build essay-writing and study advice into the subject teaching. We also hope to offer dedicated study skills sessions run by the Learning Enhancement & Academic Development Service (LEADS) https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/leads/students/, you will be able to seek advice from them as well as your tutors.

What does Access cost and is there financial support?
The fee for the Access £275 per subject (£550 for two subjects and £825 for three subjects*)

*Only students who intend to study BSc Chemical Physics should take three subjects.

If you earn £25,000 or less per annum and live in Scotland you may be eligible for the Scottish Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) Part-Time Fee Grant (PTFG) which will contribute £214 towards the cost of each subject you are studying. Students are required to pay the remaining balance themselves.

Please see full details on the SAAS Part-time Fee Grant at http://www.saas.gov.uk/part_time/ug/. There may be other sources of support specific to your own personal circumstances (e.g. retraining schemes for people leaving the Armed Forces, employer sponsorship etc) and we may be able to accept these. Please contact us for advice at shortcourses@glasgow.ac.uk

Key dates and exams
Teaching takes place over two semesters. Provisional dates for Academic Session 2020-21 are as follows:

- Semester 1 teaching- 21 September – 4 December 2020
- Semester 2 teaching- 11 January – 26 March 2021
- Exam period- April-May 2021 (Exact dates to be confirmed)

Final exams normally take place during the daytime and it is therefore important that you make arrangements to be available. We will let you know in advance the dates and times of the exams for your specific subjects, however these may only be confirmed two to three weeks before the exams take place. Please inform us if you are also taking any SQA formal exams and relevant dates so we can try to avoid any scheduling clashes.

How do I apply for university after Access?
All applications for full-time degree study in UK universities are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) www.ucas.ac.uk. Students will be provided with support and detailed guidance on the UCAS process once they have commenced their studies. Normally Access students will commence their UCAS application during November and December. Please note some degrees, for example Nursing and Teaching, will require you to attend an interview. Others may require you to take a test, such as the Law National Aptitude Test (LNAT) for Law.
Can I apply to other universities?
Yes, you can apply to other universities from this Access course. There are no agreements or guarantees however, therefore we strongly advise that you check with the Admissions office of the university which you want to apply to. It is your responsibility to check this before you enrol.

Can I apply for Medicine/ Dentistry/ Vet Medicine?
No, there is no route to these degrees via this Access programme.

Is there support available if I have a disability that may impact on my studies?
The University has a very supportive Disability Service. After enrolling on Access, all students can discuss any specific additional support needs they may have with Disability Services advisers. You should declare any disabilities at the time of enrolment and you will receive information on the next steps you need to take.
If you would like to discuss in confidence any concerns or support you may require while studying on Access, please contact the Advice and Guidance Manager on 0141 330 1823. Alternatively you can email Irene.vezza@glasgow.ac.uk.

Further information and advice
For all enquiries please contact shortcourses@glasgow.ac.uk
We also have a number of Information Sessions running throughout the year. To book a place please click here.