UNIVERSITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON



Guide for **Mature Learners**

Essential information for mature learners looking to study at the University of Wolverhampton

Introduction

Returning to education after a break can be an exciting but daunting prospect. Going to university is life-changing, and at the University of Wolverhampton we aim to provide a first-class experience for all our students, whatever their age and background.

The University of Wolverhampton welcomes thousands of mature students each year onto a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and we would like to encourage you to find out more about the opportunities with us.

Over 40% of students studying at the University of Wolverhampton are classed as mature. We recognise that people have different circumstances, qualifications and requirements when they join us, and this is reflected in the range of services and support we offer. More information can be found on pages 11–14.

We will support you throughout your journey – from considering the right course, during your time studying with us, to help with launching your graduate career or further study. Our services for students are here to guide you every step of the way. We know that the decision to become a mature student is not always an easy one. Many mature learners worry that they won't be able to cope if they have been out of education for a long time – but once they have settled into their courses, they often wonder why they didn't start sooner!

Our advanced facilities, combined with the guidance of our expert staff, can help turn your raw talent and potential into the specific skills and knowledge needed to succeed in your chosen career.

The Gateway

Information, advice and guidance



We have a team of Education Guidance Advisors based in The Gateway. They can help you to explore in more detail all the information in this booklet. The team can answer any questions you may have about coming to university, choosing a course, completing the application form, how the funding works and much, much more. Do contact us by phone or email with any queries or concerns that you have.

The Gateway Team are available Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm if you have any questions you wish to ask. You can also book an appointment for a more in-depth chat.

Education Guidance Advisors offer virtual appointments via Zoom or Teams as well as telephone appointments and in-person at the Wolverhampton campus. Please mention when you phone to book a convenient time whether you would prefer a virtual, telephone or in-person appointment.

Email: **gateway@wlv.ac.uk**
Tel: **01902 321 032**
Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/gateway**

Flexible study

Courses that fit your lifestyle

The University of Wolverhampton is a warm and welcoming place that nurtures talent and creates opportunities, helping students from diverse backgrounds to fulfil their potential within a caring and supportive community.

You might be surprised at how conveniently you can fit your studies into your week. Most full-time courses involve around 12 – 16 hours each week in class (although those with compulsory placements will demand more of your time). Courses with full-time placements include teaching, social work, nursing and the allied health professions.

You can arrange the study you will need to do outside the class around your own weekly commitments – a lot of our library resources are available online. Many of our courses have part-time, as well as full-time, options to suit busy lifestyles so you can choose the best option for you. Full-time degrees normally take three years to complete whereas part-time they can take five to six years.



Studying part-time

We understand how important it is to allow you to study the way you want to, which is why we offer a range of part-time courses and professional development opportunities.

With part-time study you can:

- fit your studies around your work and home commitments
- enhance your employment prospects
- continue earning while you are learning

Part-time study is a flexible and cost-effective way to realise your potential. It provides an opportunity to do a degree course that works with your lifestyle. You can build upon existing skills, head in a new direction, or just pursue your interests and passions!

Please note that most courses with professional work placements can only be studied full-time. The information on the course page will specify whether part-time mode is offered.



Distance learning

Many courses offer blended learning with a mixture of work done at home and on campus. In addition, there are some courses that are offered on a purely distance learning basis which is ideal if your circumstances make attending university difficult. More information on these courses can be found at: **wlv.ac.uk/courses/online-distance-learning.**

Entry requirements

There are various ways you can show us that you have the right experience and qualifications to join a University of Wolverhampton course. In our experience, many adults tend to be very modest about their achievements and overlook important work and life experiences which demonstrate their skills and capabilities.

We can discuss what the right path is for you and cover everything you need to know (including financial matters) so that you can make the right choice for you. The specific entry requirements for each department or course are listed on the website. Use our course finder to find out more at: **wlv.ac.uk/courses** However, for many of our courses, mature applicants are not required to have the same academic qualifications as school leavers.

We may consider:

- Relevant skills that have been developed during paid or voluntary work
- Professional qualifications undertaken at work
- Access to HE Diploma and other relevant level 3 qualifications
- A Foundation Year studied prior to starting the degree (for more information see below)
- Writing an essay, providing a portfolio of evidence, or attending an interview showing your skills and knowledge

As part of the application process, you will be asked to provide a satisfactory reference and sometimes complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check if you will be working with children or vulnerable people.

Foundation years

Many of our degree courses offer a four-year version, including a foundation year, for people who do not meet the entry requirements to go straight onto the degree. There is a Prepare for Foundation Year Day that you need to attend as part of the entry requirements for these courses. These are listed in the courses section of the website along with the three-year versions at: **wlv.ac.uk/courses**

If you are not sure whether you will need to do a foundation year, then contact the Gateway Team for a chat.

Maths and English

Some of our courses require applicants to have GCSE Maths and English, or a level 2 equivalent such as Functional Skills. If you do not have these then you may be able to sit the University's equivalency tests. For most courses these can be done online, however for teaching courses they take place on campus. More information can be found at: **wlv.ac.uk/equivalency**



How to apply

What you need to know



How to make an application

For full-time undergraduate courses, apply through UCAS at: **ucas.com/apply**

For part-time undergraduate courses and most postgraduate courses, you apply directly to the university by clicking on the 'apply now' button on the relevant course page. Find out more at: **wlv.ac.uk/apply**

When do I apply?

As a general guide, full-time applications can be made to UCAS between September and June, however some courses may be full if you apply after January.

Applications for part-time and postgraduate study tend to be made later in the academic year so you can still apply if there are places. The course page will have up-to-date information on whether the course has closed or is still taking applications.

Student finance

What you need to know

Student finance

Student finance can often be seen as a complex process, especially for mature students with dependants. However, alongside tuition fees, there are a wide range of funds available which students may be eligible to apply for, these include:

- Maintenance loan
- Disabled Students Allowance
- Parent Learning Allowance
- Childcare Grant
- NHS Training Grant
- Master's loan
- Dennis Turner (Hardship) Fund
- Scholarships and bursaries

For further information, visit our website at: **wlv.ac.uk/moneymatters** and the Student Finance website for the full eligibility criteria at: **gov.uk/student-finance** Further advice and guidance on all money matters relating to higher education can be accessed by contacting the Gateway Team.

Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/gateway**
Email: **gateway@wlv.ac.uk**
Call: **01902 321 032**

Care leavers and estranged students

If you have spent some time in care, or are under 25 and have no communicative relationship with your parents, we can offer additional support. Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/care**

Scholarships

The University offers a range of scholarships and bursaries. Some of these are targeted at specific groups of students, others are available to everyone. Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/scholarships**

The Dennis Turner Hardship Fund

The Dennis Turner Fund is the University of Wolverhampton's hardship fund – demonstrating the University's commitment to supporting students who find themselves in genuine financial hardship that might impact on their ability to continue on a course. You must be a current, enrolled student* to apply, and you will be asked to provide details of your income and outgoings as part of the application process so that the team can ensure the funds are targeted at those most in need. More information can be found at: **wlv.ac.uk/fund**

*Please check webpage for full eligibility criteria.



Student life

Mental health and wellbeing

You may find that life at university challenges you in unexpected ways, especially if you're balancing your studies with work and home commitments. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHW) team can help you access support for various personal challenges. We offer a range of support pathways from signposting, referrals, workshops and 1:1 sessions.

For more information and advice regarding mental health and wellbeing support visit: **wlv.ac.uk/mhw**

Accessibility, disability and inclusion

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all students and learners, including those with a disability or specific learning difficulties.

Depending on your individual needs, you may be eligible for additional support at university. The Accessibility, Disability and Inclusion team are here to provide you with confidential, personalised advice and information about the wide range of support options to which you may be entitled.

If you have a disability – for example, a long-term health condition or mental health condition or a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia – you should **register with the team** to discuss your support needs so a reasonable adjustment plan can be created. You should also check if you are eligible for the **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)** and if you are, apply before starting your course.

If you have any questions or would like more information, visit the Student Life page at: **wlv.ac.uk/student-life** or contact the team via email: **disability-inclusion@wlv.ac.uk**

Chaplaincy team

Chaplaincy staff support the religious, cultural and pastoral needs of students and staff. Everyone is welcome to receive one-to-one support or join one of our community building activities. We are a team of Chaplains from various faiths and between us cover all of the University sites.

We also offer private and confidential conversations and support online, and over the phone. Chaplains attend events in churches, mosques, gurdwaras and other community venues. We also hold events for students and staff throughout the year. Find out more at: **wlv.ac.uk/chaplaincy**

Students' Union

The University of Wolverhampton Students' Union is here for all students, regardless of course, mode or location of study. We are here to represent you, advise you and make sure you get the most out of your university experience. For more information visit: **wolvesunion.org**

As well as providing services such as societies, volunteering and course representatives, we also provide a fantastic support service. Our independent Advice and Representation Centre offers free, confidential, and impartial advice in areas such as academic, finance and housing, and is accredited by the Advice Quality Standard.

You can get in touch with our advisors via website at: **wolvesunion.org/advice/enquiry** or call: **01902 322 038.**

Academic support



Skills for learning

As a University of Wolverhampton student, you can access free one-to-one advice to help you develop and improve your academic and study skills. There are also study guides and workshops to support your studies.

The Skills for Learning Team can offer guidance on various aspects such as planning and writing your academic assignments, exam revision, tips on delivering effective presentations, support with referencing your sources, how to use your time efficiently and how to organise your academic study.

We understand that many students are often on a tight schedule, so we offer our workshops online via Teams. For more information, visit: **wlv.ac.uk/skills** or email: **skills@wlv.libanswers.com** The Skills for Learning Team are based in the University's libraries. For more information on the subject resources, booking a study space and using the library, visit: **wlv.ac.uk/lib**

Academic coaches

We know that enrolling onto a degree can be both an exciting and daunting prospect. New systems to use, new people to meet and new locations to travel to can all mean your start to life in higher education involves quite a lot – and all that before you even attend your first lecture!

The Academic Coach team runs throughout each faculty of the university and we all hail from a range of backgrounds with around 66% of us being proud alumni of WLV! We've all been in your shoes at some point, so we can understand how exciting and maybe nerve wracking the whole experience feels, which is where we come in.

If you're on the way to beginning your university studies at Level 3 or Level 4 across one of our degree programmes here at the University of Wolverhampton – then upon starting your course, you will be assigned your own academic coach, whose main job is supporting you via a coaching programme whilst you get to grips with everything and answering all the many questions in between – and don't worry, we're expecting many! During the typical buzz and mania of Welcome Week through to end-of-year submissions and grading, we'll be your constant, known and friendly face to turn to. It's important we get to know you, as everyone is different, and their educational journey is different too – your typical Monday might look very different to the next person's – and we want to make sure your story is both celebrated and supported whilst you're with us.

For more information visit: **wlv.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/academic-coaches**

Careers and employability

Our team of professional careers advisors and consultants are here to help explore your careers aspirations through 1:1 appointments, and can support you in identifying the skills and attributes you need to make these plans happen.

You can access the careers service from the first day you start your academic journey right through to the end of your degree. Our alumni can benefit for a further three years after graduation. We are here to empower and support all stages of your application and career journey.

Contact Careers, Enterprise and The Workplace for help with volunteering, CV-building, placements, starting your own business and much more!
Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/careers**



Visit us

University Open Days

Our Open Days are held throughout the year and provide the perfect opportunity to explore our facilities, courses, and meet our dedicated staff. When you visit us, you can:

- Tour the university and explore our modern learning spaces and state-of-the-art facilities.
- Speak directly with academics and support staff to get your questions answered.
- Understand how student finance works, including information on tuition fees, repayment options, and financial support available for adult learners.

For forthcoming Open Day dates, tips to make the most of your visit, and to book your place, visit: **wlv.ac.uk/opendays**

Campus and Accommodation Tours

If you can't make it to an Open Day, we also offer regular campus and accommodation tours. These guided tours are an excellent way to explore the university, giving you a chance to see our facilities and student accommodation firsthand.
For tour dates and to register, visit: **wlv.ac.uk/news-and-events/open-day/campus-and-accommodation-tours**

Virtual Events and Webinars

We know that visiting in person isn't always possible, so we offer regular virtual events tailored to the needs of mature learners. Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/news-and-event** to find out more.
You can also find video tours of our campuses at **wlv.ac.uk/university-life/our-campus.**

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Contact us

Email: **gateway@wlv.ac.uk**
Tel: **01902 321 032**
Visit: **wlv.ac.uk/gateway**

Details are correct at time of going to print but may be subject to change. Up-to-date information along with further details and links to relevant information can be found at: **wlv.ac.uk/mature**