What to do with a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) and Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

A Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) and a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) are recognised stand-alone qualifications. They are studied at university and are usually awarded if you leave a degree course early or do not wish to commit to a full degree. The qualifications are awarded after the successful completion of:

- **CertHE**: one year of full-time study and passing 120 credits
- **DipHE**: two years of full-time study and passing 240 credits

**Value of a CertHE and DipHE**

A CertHE or DipHE may qualify you for some professions as they hold a level of achievement equivalent to other educational/vocational qualifications; for example, a DipHE in Business and Management is comparable to a NVQ 4 Diploma in Business and Administration, and could possibly allow you to work in occupations related to recruitment, sales, marketing and business management.

What is more, many employers will also recruit students from any degree discipline as they value the knowledge, skills and experience that students gain during their time at university. Therefore, it is important to:

- understand the relevance and transferability of your qualification when considering occupations and job vacancies
- emphasise how you have used your initiative and time at university when applying for jobs
- demonstrate the appropriate attitudes and transferable skills relevant to the job opportunity you are applying for

For a comparison of UK qualification types and levels, please view the ‘Higher Education Comparison Table’ detailed below and/or access the following GOV.UK link:

[www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels](http://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels)

**Table 1: Higher Education Comparison Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification Levels</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate (PhD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masters (MA, MSc, MBA)</td>
<td>Postgrad Diploma</td>
<td>Postgrad Certificate</td>
<td>Masters Degree Apprenticeship</td>
<td>Degree Apprenticeship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree with honours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree (BA, BSc)</td>
<td>Diploma of Higher Education</td>
<td>Foundation Degree (FdA, FdFc)</td>
<td>Higher National Diploma</td>
<td>Higher Apprenticeship</td>
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</table>

**Apprenticeships**

You may wish to consider doing an apprenticeship which offers on the job training. There are a variety of apprenticeships available in different occupations which may suit your strengths, interests and career
objective. However, as a word of caution, some apprenticeships may not be funded and many are restricted to location and involve a competitive process. You should also check the entry requirements and level of the apprenticeship you are interested in as some may not accept applicants with a CertHE, DipHE and/or particular number of credits - as you are too highly qualified for this route.

For further information on apprenticeships, please view the websites below:

- [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) - this site provides an insight into apprenticeships and the different types/levels of apprenticeships on offer
- [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship) - up to date information on apprenticeship opportunities. You can also use this site to apply for vacancies
- [www.amazingapprenticeships.com](http://www.amazingapprenticeships.com) - a site which provides detailed information on apprenticeships as well as access to apprenticeship-related webinars
- [www.ucas.com/ucas/16-18-choices/search-and-apply/apprenticeships](http://www.ucas.com/ucas/16-18-choices/search-and-apply/apprenticeships) - a site providing information on apprenticeship qualifications and how to apply
- [www.careersworld.co.uk](http://www.careersworld.co.uk) - information on regions of the UK that are offering apprenticeships
- [www.thetechpartnership.com/recruit-and-train/degree-apprenticeships](http://www.thetechpartnership.com/recruit-and-train/degree-apprenticeships) - information on degree apprenticeships
- [www.careerpilot.org.uk/info/apprenticeships/new-degree-apprenticeships-from](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/info/apprenticeships/new-degree-apprenticeships-from) - a site providing information on Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
- [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/apprenticeships](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/apprenticeships) - a site listing different types and levels of apprenticeships
- [www.thebigchoice.com/Jobs/Bright_Future](http://www.thebigchoice.com/Jobs/Bright_Future) a site connecting students and graduates with jobs, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities
- [www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk](http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk) - an independent recruitment specialist which matches employers and apprentices through ‘work-based learning and earning’ opportunities

**Further study**

A CertHE or DipHE can function as a stepping stone to a full degree and you may be able to skip the first one or two years of a degree course. However, much will depend on the entry requirements of the course you are interested in and whether your previous subject area is transferrable. We recommend that you discuss your qualifications and the entry requirements with the course provider.

**Some important considerations**

**Loans:** as a CertHE and DipHE are higher education qualifications, your student loan will work the same way as if you complete a full degree. If you have received a student loan to cover your course fees and living costs, you will not start repaying your loan until your income has reached the current level for repayments (£21,000). If you are in receipt of (or above) this level of income, you will then be liable to start paying off your loan from the April after you have left the course.

If you withdraw from a full degree, you must notify your student loan company (e.g. Student Finance England) and they will then calculate the amount of loan you have received and need to repay.

**Bursaries and scholarships:** if you leave a degree course early, you may have to pay back some of the bursaries and/or scholarship monies awarded to you. However each university or awarding body have their own repayment conditions, so please speak to your university finance office or the bursary/scholarship provider for more information.

**Writing your CV and covering letter:** you can include your CertHE / DipHE in the education section of your CV and use your time spent at university to highlight key skills and knowledge you have acquired. If you wish to clarify your reasons for leaving a course, a covering letter provides more scope for explanation.

**Further help and support**

Purple Door supports students from the University of Portsmouth up to five years after the completion or departure of their course. Please drop in to Purple Door anytime during our opening hours to receive further support. If you are unable to visit Purple Door, please call us on 02392 842684, email us at purpledoor@port.ac.uk or visit the Purple Door website [www.port.ac.uk/purpledoor](http://www.port.ac.uk/purpledoor)

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