

# Why study for a degree?

**Returning to study and/or progressing to university can be very rewarding but it can also be very hard work and often requires a lot of motivation. So why do it?**

**Sense of personal achievement.** Maybe you feel that you've never quite fulfilled your academic (or intellectual) potential? Many of our adult returners decide to embark on degree study because they feel they have reached a stage in their lives where they now want to take on a new challenge. Many feel that they missed this opportunity when they were younger and that the time is now right for them to commit to 3 or 4 years of study.

**Increased earning potential.** Students come to QMU from all different backgrounds and with varying experience. Some recognise that obtaining a degree may be one way to achieve a higher earning potential. While a degree is not an automatic passport to a better paid job, recent research shows the value of having a degree is still considerable as the gap between the earnings of graduates and qualified non-graduates continues to grow over the ten to fifteen years after graduation (Prospects website; [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)). The skills and knowledge gained at university, coupled with experience, are therefore a real asset for career progression and associated earning power.

**A degree is a requirement for some occupational areas.** Healthcare professions, for example, usually require a degree for entry. Students on such courses may have been employed within these sectors already, in jobs which haven't required a degree. Other students are making a complete career change.

**Education is for all - regardless of age, previous qualifications or employment history.** It doesn't matter that you didn't go to university immediately after you left school. Today QMU attracts a broad range of students and our admissions tutors positively value the life experience and maturity that older students bring to their studies. Whatever you decide to study you are likely to find that you are studying with a diverse group of students.

**We have outlined some of the positive reasons for undertaking a degree. We do realise though that there may be a number of barriers and issues that you may need to address and weigh-up before you can make your decision.**

**The remainder of this guide is devoted to addressing these matters and helping you to consider your options.**

