

**NCUK**

**International  
Foundation  
Year**

**NCUK**  
UNIVERSITY PATHWAYS



# **International Foundation Year Programme and Module Overview**

# International Foundation Year

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International Foundation Year

## Preparing students for first-year entry at university

### Overview

The International Foundation Year (IFY) is a rigorous pre-university programme designed for international students. It bridges the gap between secondary education and undergraduate study, equipping students with subject-specific knowledge, essential academic skills, and English language proficiency to succeed at university. The programme adopts a 120-credit structure, with each credit representing 10 hours of learning. Students will complete 105 or 120 credits depending on their English language proficiency. Both routes are fully recognised for progression to NCUK University Partners.

**98%**  
of IFY students successfully complete their degree\*

**70%**  
of IFY students achieve a 2:1 or higher at university\*

### Benchmark statement

The NCUK IFY is benchmarked by Ecctis as comparable to UK GCE A-levels, US Advanced Placement, Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, Australian Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education, and Canadian Alberta High School Diploma standards.

### Entry requirements

Students entering onto the programme are expected to have completed local high school<sup>2</sup> (e.g. completion of IGCSE/O Levels/GCSE's with four modules at grade 4 or above, typically including English and mathematics). Additionally, they must meet the English language requirement of IELTS 5.0 or an equivalent qualification.



<sup>2</sup> Country-specific requirements are set out in the NCUK International Foundation Year Entry Requirements: <https://www.ncuk.ac.uk/ncuk-programmes/international-foundation-year/>

\*Data from 2021 graduates is sourced from NCUK University Partners.

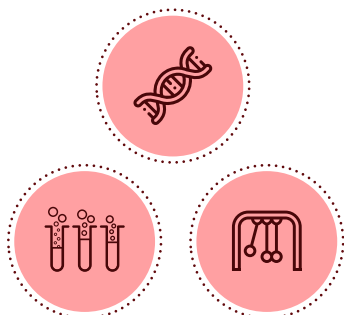
## Programme structure

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Students study three subject modules alongside an English language module as well as a skills-based module:

### Subject modules



&

### English language module

English for Academic  
Purposes (EAP)

or

EAP for  
Proficient Users

or

Research and  
Communication Skills (RCS)

&

### Skills-based module



### Duration:

The standard programme duration is one academic year. However, an accelerated six-month option and a part-time two-year option are also available.

### Standard delivery example:

- **Teaching hours:** 18 hours per week (12 hours for subject modules, 6 hours for EAP).
- **Total:** 540 hours of guided learning + 660 hours of independent study (1,200 learning hours).
- **Duration:** 30 weeks (divided into two 15-week semesters)

## Subject modules

There are 12 subject modules available, and Study Centres can customise module offerings based on resources and student demand. Each subject module is worth 25 credits.



### Art & Design:

Develops a portfolio of practical and contextual work, focusing on creativity, technique, and conceptual development.



### Biology:

Covers cellular organisation, genetics, physiology, and experimental techniques.



### Business Studies:

Focuses on business operations, marketing, human resource management (HRM), finance, and strategic analysis.



### Chemistry:

Explores atomic structure, organic chemistry, equilibrium, and analytical techniques.



### Computer Science:

Introduces programming, algorithms, and system design concepts.



**Economics:**

Examines micro- and macro-economics, market structures, and global trade.

**Further Maths:**

Provides advanced mathematical concepts for students pursuing technical disciplines.

**Global Studies:**

Covers globalisation, sustainability, and international relations.

**Integrated Maths:**

Emphasises data interpretation, modelling, and applied numeracy.

**Physics:**

Explores mechanics, electricity, waves, and quantum phenomena.

**Sociology:**

Analyses societal structures, relationships, and cultural influences.

**Technical Maths:**

Develop skills in engineering, computing, physics, and other technical fields, with added focus on mechanics, differential equations, and advanced trigonometry.

## English language module

Accepted by most NCUK University Partners as a proof of English language proficiency, students study one of the following English language modules tailored to their language proficiency level:

- **English for Academic Purposes (EAP):** For students with IELTS 5.0 or equivalent who lack a Secure English Language Test (SELT) acceptable for NCUK University Partner entry. EAP is worth 40 credits.
- **EAPPU (EAP for Proficient Users):** Designed for students with a strong English foundation but without a valid SELT, or those who studied in English with an unrecognised qualification for visa purposes. EAPPU is worth 25 credits.
- **Research and Communication Skills (RCS):** For students who already hold an acceptable SELT, such as IELTS 6.0 or IGCSE English grade C or better, completed within one year of IFY entry. RCS is worth 25 credits.

## Skills-based module

Our skills-based module (Skills for Success) is a fully online, asynchronous module within the programme that develops essential academic and transferable skills including time management, critical thinking, academic integrity, and digital literacy. Skills for success is worth 5 credits.

Subject modules are assessed using a combination of coursework and examinations, ensuring students are well-prepared for university-level expectations. Each subject module is awarded a grade, as detailed in the table below.

Subject module grading		
Grade	Percentage Range	NCUK Points
A*	≥80%	56
A	70-79%	48
B	60-69%	40
C	50-59%	32
D	40-49%	24
E	35-39%	16

The English language modules assess four different language skills – reading, writing, speaking, and listening – in alignment with internationally recognised English standards. Students receive an overall grade for the module and individual grades for each skill, as outlined in the table below.

English language module grading		Equivalency grades								
Percentage	Grade	Password	IELTS	TOEFL IBT	Skills for English	LanguageCert Academic	Cambridge English Scale Score*	PTE Academic	OTE (Oxford Test of English)	CEFR
90%+	A*	Password plus	7.5	102 - 109	C1 Pass	80 - 84	191	75	141 - 170	C1
80 - 89%+	A	7	7	94 - 101	C1 Pass	75 - 79	185	66		C1
70 - 79%+	B	6.5	6.5	79 - 93	B2 Pass	70 - 74	176	59	111 - 140	B2
60 - 69%+	C	6	6	60 - 78	B2 Pass	65 - 69	169	52		B2
50 - 59%+	D	5.5	5.5	46 - 59	B2 Pass	60 - 64	162	46		B2
40 - 49%+	E	5	5	35 - 45	B1 Pass	50 - 59	154	41	81 - 110	B1
<39%	U	4.5	4.5	32 - 34	B1 Pass	40 - 49	N/A	N/A		B1

\*We accept Cambridge English Scale scores from Cambridge English Qualifications: B2 First, C1 Advanced & C2 Proficiency and Linguaskill.

**Progression**

Certified students can progress to the first year of more than 7,500+ undergraduate degree courses at NCUK University Partners, including popular subjects such as medicine, business, engineering, law, computer science, nursing and many more.

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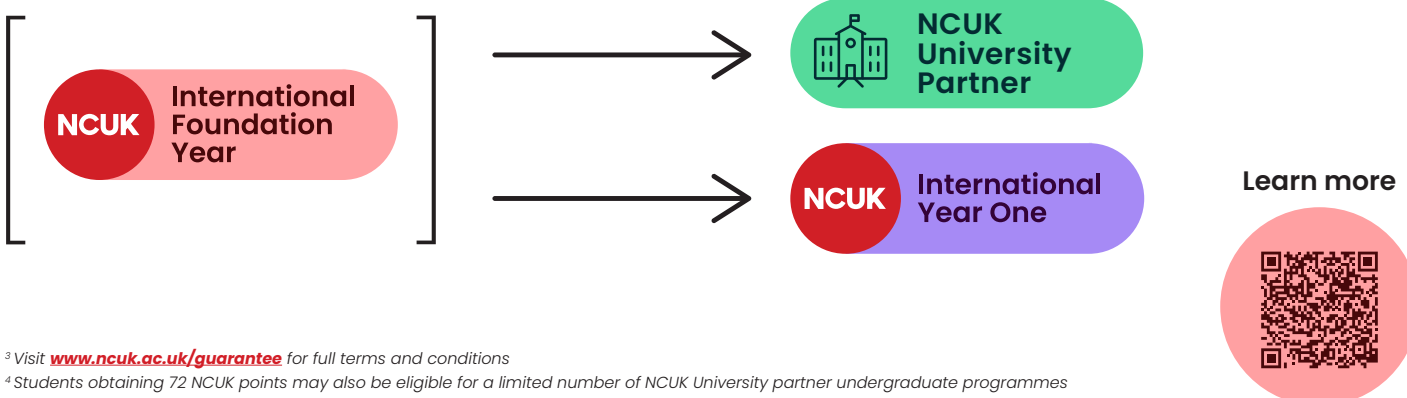
**View all 60+ universities**



**NCUK University Partners**

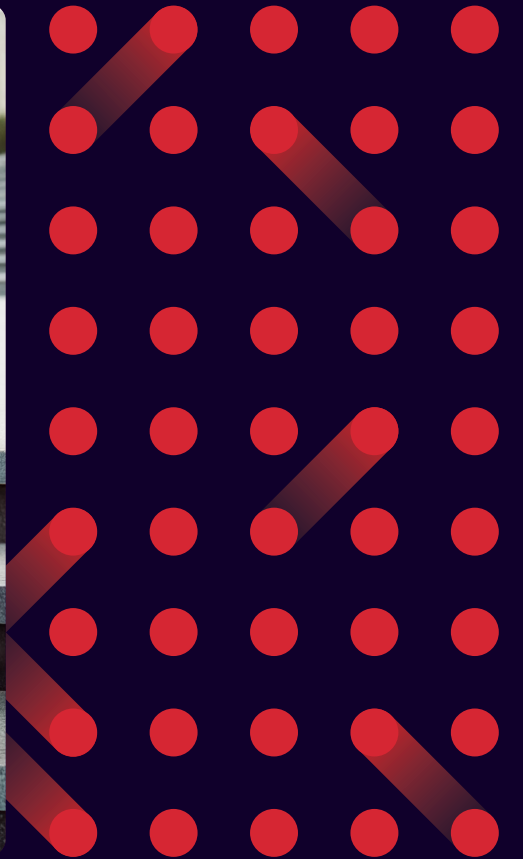
Students obtaining at least 96 NCUK points on subject modules and a minimum grade of C in the EAP/EAPPU modules (with no less than D in each EAP skills component) or a minimum grade of D in RCS are guaranteed entry<sup>3</sup> into an NCUK University Partner undergraduate programme<sup>4</sup>.

Students can also progress directly onto the NCUK International Year One.



<sup>3</sup> Visit [www.ncuk.ac.uk/guarantee](http://www.ncuk.ac.uk/guarantee) for full terms and conditions

<sup>4</sup> Students obtaining 72 NCUK points may also be eligible for a limited number of NCUK University partner undergraduate programmes



[www.ncuk.ac.uk](http://www.ncuk.ac.uk) | [www.ncuk.cn](http://www.ncuk.cn)

