

Astronomy Qualifications

The Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) offers two astronomy qualifications, at Certificate (FHEQ4) and Diploma (FHEQ5) levels.

Both qualifications take place over the course of 1 academic year, comprising weekly evening classes, followed by periods of online study and 1-2 Saturday workshops per term. Details are as follows:

<p>Certificate in Astronomy 60 Credits at FHEQ4</p> <p>Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stars and the cosmic cycle • Galaxies and quasars • Planets and planetary systems 	<p>Diploma in Astronomy, 60 Credits at FHEQ5</p> <p>Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Astronomical techniques across the spectrum • Stellar phenomena • The early Universe
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Which course?

Some students have concerns over which of the astronomy qualifications is most appropriate for them. This guide is intended to help you if you are in this position.

<p><u>Certificate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an entry-level qualification. It is ideal for people who are new to astronomy or to studying astronomy at University level. • It enables students to develop a solid understanding of the properties and behaviour of stars, planets, galaxies and quasars, and of the physical concepts and observational methods on which our understanding of these objects is based. • It provides an introduction to some areas of current research (e.g. extra-solar planets), and practical experience in the use and interpretation of astronomical 	<p><u>Diploma</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This builds upon the learning and development acquired by students in the Certificate to address more advanced topics. • Students are expected to have a good understanding of the foundational astronomical knowledge and physical science taught in the Certificate and to be capable of applying this understanding via numerical problem-solving. • It enables students to gain familiarity with the full range of methods used in astronomical research, and to develop an in-depth physical understanding of what causes stars to change
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<p>data to answer scientific questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have a higher-level qualification or substantial amateur astronomy experience, don't be put off by this qualification at FHEQ4. It provides a solid foundation of scientific knowledge to build upon. • It encompasses extensive class discussion enabling students to apply their developing physical understanding to current research questions and astronomy stories in the news. • It requires a willingness to engage with numerical problem-solving. • It is designed to lead directly into the Diploma. 	<p>their behaviour, from stable evolution to more exotic and explosive phenomena.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It introduces students to the study of cosmology and the theoretical and observational methods needed to understand the early Universe. • Students who have not completed the Certificate should have equivalent experience of astronomy study at FHEQ4 level, <i>or</i> have studied physics at this level and be able to demonstrate substantial knowledge of fundamental topics in astronomy.
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Still unsure?

If you would like an informal discussion on academic matters before making your application, please contact the Course Director, Dr Judith Croston judith.croston@ice.cam.ac.uk

If you have any questions about the application process, contact our Admissions team: ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

For all other enquiries, contact the Academic Programme Manager, Linda Fisher: ug-awards@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746218/ 746227