

University: a waste of time and money or simply a slackers alternative to getting a job

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What you are about to read is a bit of rant about how rubbish university is for actually getting a job and how the government are to blame. Oh and I blame a few immigrants but that's just because I read the daily mail on the tube. University is the biggest investment which 18-21 year olds can make. Socially and financially it is seen as a sound venture. A few years away from your parents learning about life, living/socialising with new people and all importantly spending your own money on everything. But the money the government very generously lend to you - at the 4.8% CPI inflation rate, when wage rises are determined on the 2.4% as measured on the RPI - normally isn't quite enough. Students work solidly all summer and the lucky few can borrow from the olds, those who can't get term-time jobs. Strictly speaking students are in full-time education but I personally have 10-14 hours a week this is plenty of time off for me to get a full time job. However, I live in an import-rich population (yes I mean I live somewhere with lots of EU nationals who are 'unskilled' workers) and my CV is dismissed merely because I have A-levels and GCSE's which make me expensive labour. I know a guy (these sorts of stories always start like this later on you'll meet a friend of a friend's exploits) who failed his A-levels quite spectacularly, dropped out and went to work for an accountancy firm. He finished his final accountant's exams about 3 years ago and is now paid £130K a year. He also does not have the £10,000-12,000 worth of student loads others his age have. Ten to twelve grand of debt is doable, my fellow students of the top-up fees era will take on about £20,000 to £30,000 depending on the length of the course. Of that sum £9,000 or more pays for tuition, which works out roughly that my lecturers are paid about a tenner an hour PER PERSON. Assuming the lecturers have 40 students in 10 one hour lectures a week then they should earn a little over £48k a year, most universities are research led and the lecturers will be getting paid for that as well. Still regular lecturers - actually called 'teachers' - start on minimum of £20k for a 40 hour week plus all the unpaid work we know teachers do. The government is wrongly investing in Further/Higher education educators, creating an over skilled workforce. This might just be the case in my little fishbowl world but with an ageing demographic profile and increased EU immigration do not be surprised to see the dole queue full of qualified workers in years to come. I'm not saying all people at Uni won't get jobs, far from it; those at Oxford, Cambridge and other red-brick universities reading useful subjects will get jobs immediately. Wasters at ex-polys studying a token 'ology' however will have to be extremely talented to get a job. McDonalds and a few other chains are making steps in the right direction by bringing in their own equivalent qualifications, where the company can set the syllabus and has a direct control over what students learn - hopefully they'll make it useful. The last initiative the government had was to introduce 'real life skills' modules into sixth form colleges. These were called Key Skills and you learnt useful things like … well I can't remember … admittedly I did fail but that's because they insulted my intelligence by asking me to write essays about the most ridiculous things - jus to clarify I'm now at a poly doing journalism. The syllabus included basic Microsoft Excel tutoring, but seeing as everyone who got a science A-level could use the software it made it a fairly pointless use of an hour. I do not suggest people shun education because it is useful, but when Universities were elitist and only accepted those who could afford it or those who were extremely talented there were a lot less problems with the skills of Britain's workforce.