

Further information: Study on the wider benefits of completing a degree

We are looking for graduates who started a degree in any of the subjects below in 2012 or after and graduated in 2015, 2016 or 2017, to take part in an online focus group or telephone interview. If this applies to you and you are interested in taking part in this study, please read the following information and complete the consent and sign-up form [here](#).

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you want to take part or not, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

You can also download a copy of the information on this page for your own records [here](#).

What is the study about?

The Department for Education (DfE) has commissioned the Institute for Employment Research (IER) at the University of Warwick to carry out this piece of research exploring the benefits of studying specific subjects that have been identified as offering lower than average financial returns for some graduates. The DfE wants to more fully understand the contribution of these subjects to the lives of individual graduates as well as to the UK economy, culture and society. Based on a recent report commissioned by the DfE, these subjects were identified as:

- Agriculture; Biosciences; Chemistry; Creative Arts and Design; Performing Arts, English; History; Languages; Philosophy; Psychology.

We would like to hear from English-domiciled graduates (i.e. those who were classified as English for funding purposes) who received an undergraduate degree in any of these subjects from a UK higher education institution in 2015, 2016 or 2017.

The aims of the research are:

- To identify which measures of career success (beyond earnings) are most important to graduates and to identify the relative importance of these measures;
- To identify how graduates view their higher education (HE) choices, how they made their choices about which subject to study at HE and about their expectations of and experiences with HE;
- To understand graduates' experiences of work, the types of work they are in, their levels of career satisfaction and their levels of general wellbeing;
- To understand the value of HE, on an individual, societal and economic level, for subject areas that may not necessarily lead to high levels of pay.

If you are interested in taking part in a telephone interview or online focus group please read the information below. Click on the questions to reveal the answers.

If you have read the information and want to sign up, please complete the consent and sign-up form [here](#).

Project Team:

[Wil Hunt](#) (Principal Investigator)

[Heike Behle](#)

[Gaby Atfield](#)

[Daria Luchinskaya](#)

[David Owen](#)

[Beate Baldauf](#)

[Clare Lyonette](#)

Project Funder:



[Link to sign-up page.](#)

[Link to project info page.](#)

[Downloadable flyer.](#)

Click [here](#) if you want to jump to the privacy notice.

Click [here](#) if you want to go back to the consent and sign-up form.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you to decide. You do not have to take part if you don't want to. If you would like to participate in an online focus group or a telephone interview, please complete the consent form at the end of this page to confirm that you agree to take part.

What will taking part involve?

If you decide to sign up to take part in the research, you will be asked to provide a name, email address and/or telephone number (if preferred). These contact details will be held for the purposes of communication before and during the focus group or telephone interview but this will not be passed on to any third parties: it will be encrypted (see below) and kept securely in a password-protected folder at the University of Warwick for the purposes of the research and will only be accessible to the researchers. We will then contact you to let you know the date and time of the focus group and/or telephone interview and the information you will need to join the group or to arrange a convenient time for you to be interviewed.

The online focus groups use the VisionsLive platform and should last around 60-90 minutes. Once you have agreed to take part and have been assigned to a focus group, we will send you full details of how the online focus group works. However, the key points are as follows:

- We will send you an email invite containing a link to the online focus group and providing you with some instructions (at this point we will encrypt your name and email address);
- During the focus group you will use a pseudonym to protect your anonymity;
- The focus group acts like a face-to-face focus group, but participants cannot see or hear each other;
- Instead participants type their answers to the moderator's questions using their computer or other device;
- Participants can see and respond to the written responses provided by other participants, similar to an online chat room or instant messaging group;
- Responses given during the session will be automatically transcribed;
- You will not require access to a webcam and the focus group and the session will not be audio or video recorded.
- If you have any concerns about what to do, please just ask.

If you indicate that you would be willing to take part in an interview, we will contact you to arrange a telephone interview to ask you about your own views on the research topic. The researcher will call you on the date and time agreed. The interview should last around 30-45 minutes and will be audio-recorded if you agree (if you would prefer not to be audio-recorded, the interviewer will take notes during the interview). You can tell us your preference on the consent form.

You will not be invited to participate in both a focus group and an interview, but if you are willing to take part in either a focus group or interview, you can select both options in the form and we will assign you to either a focus group or an interview.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

By taking part in the study you will be making a valuable contribution to research which informs Department for Education policy. In turn this will help inform universities and policymakers about the wider (non-financial) value of higher education

Are there any possible disadvantages, side effects, risks, and/or discomforts of taking part in this study?

There are no anticipated disadvantages, side effects, risks, and/or discomforts of taking part in this study as the focus groups and interviews will only ask you about your own experiences and assessments.

If you take part in a focus group, we will ask you and others in the group not to talk to people outside the group about what was said during the discussion. However, we need you to be aware that we cannot stop or prevent participants who were in the group from sharing information that should be confidential.

Expenses and payments

You will receive a £15 online voucher as a thank you for taking part in a focus group or telephone interview. This will be sent to you electronically after the focus group or interview is complete.

What will happen when the study ends?

We will pseudonymise your responses and personal data and store it securely as outlined below. This means we will separate your responses from your personal data using a pseudonym so that only the project team will be able to identify whom responses belong to using a name or ID number that we will generate for our records. Your encrypted contact details will be deleted securely after the end of the project. The pseudonymised data will be stored securely at the University of Warwick and then securely deleted after 10 years. If you take part in a telephone interview and consent to it being audio recorded, the audio recording will be held for one year after the publication of the final report and any related journal publications and then securely deleted. You will not be contacted again about this or other research unless you sign up to participate in a future research project.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the study will be published in a final report which will be made available online on the gov.uk website. A peer-reviewed article may also be prepared for publication in an academic journal. Care will be taken to ensure that you are not identifiable in any research reports.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

Yes. We will not report your name or anything that would make you personally identifiable in any outputs from the research and all best endeavours will be made to ensure that data in any publications is anonymised. All participants will be given a pseudonym for the purposes of reporting, and any identifying information will be removed to ensure confidentiality. For example, the report may describe a participant in the following way: 'Jane (pseudonym), English graduate'. The focus group data and interview data will be stored safely on a password-protected folder at the University of Warwick and will only be accessible by the research team. Contact details will be encrypted and will not be stored in the same file as your data from the focus group or interview. The IER and its data storage procedures are fully compliant with GDPR. Please see the privacy notice below for more details about the

personal data we will collect from you and how it will be used.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on being part of the study?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Refusal to participate will not affect you in any way. If you agree to participate, you may nevertheless withdraw from the study at any time without affecting you in any way. You have the right to withdraw from the study completely and decline any further contact by study staff after you withdraw. However, you will not be able to withdraw your responses (if they are used in any research reports) after the findings from the research have been published.

If you take part in an online focus group and inform us that you wish to withdraw from the research we will not use your response in the research, but we will not be able to delete your responses from the transcript of the session.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the University of Warwick's Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC). HSSREC approval was given on (insert date) (insert HSSREC reference number).

Who is organising and funding the study?

The Department for Education (DfE) is organising and funding this study, which will be carried out by Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER) at the University of Warwick.

Who should I contact if I wish to make a complaint?

Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might have suffered will be addressed. Please address your complaint to the person below, who is a senior University of Warwick official entirely independent of this study:

Head of Research Governance
Research & Impact Services
University House
University of Warwick
Coventry
CV4 8UW

Email: researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk
Tel: 024 76 522746

Please see the privacy notice below for details of how to get in touch if you wish to discuss or make a complaint about our use of your personal data.

What if I want more information about the study?

If you have any questions about any aspect of the study, or your participation in it, please contact: W.Hunt@warwick.ac.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this research information.

PRIVACY NOTICE

How we will ensure that we are using your personal data fairly and transparently in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Study Title: Study on the wider benefits of completing a degree

Who we are

The Department for Education (DfE) is organising and funding this study, which will be carried out by Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER) at the University of Warwick as the data processor. For the purpose of data protection legislation, the DfE is the data controller for any personal data processed as part of this project.

How we will use your personal data

If you agree to participate, we will ask you to sign up for a focus group or interview after reading the participant information sheet and completing the consent form. We will use data about your degree subject, type of higher education institution, broad job title and employment sector to collate and analyse the research findings.

The nature of your personal data that we will be using

The categories of personal data that we will ask for are:

- A name you want us to address you by;
- Email address;
- Telephone number (if you want to take part in a telephone interview);
- HEI where you received your undergraduate degree;
- Degree subject;
- Your current work situation.

Why our use of your personal data is lawful

Under the GDPR, we are required to have a lawful basis for processing your personal data. For the purpose of this project, the lawful basis is that processing is necessary to perform a task in the public interest (i.e. providing unbiased research evidence for the DfE to make an informed decision regarding any future reforms to the EP training provider commissioning model).

Who will have access to your personal data?

Access to your personal data will be restricted to members of the Warwick Institute for Employment Research project team for this research project. We will not report your name or anything that would make you personally identifiable in any outputs from the research and will use our best endeavours to ensure that data in the report is anonymised. We will ask focus group participants not to talk to people outside the group about what was said during the discussion. However, we need you to be aware that we cannot stop or prevent participants who were in the group from sharing things that should be confidential.

All participants will be given a pseudonym for the purposes of reporting, and any identifying information will be removed to ensure confidentiality. Your interview data will be stored safely on a password-protected folder at the University of Warwick and will only be accessible by the research team. Contact details will not be stored in the same file as your interview data. The IER and its data storage procedures are fully compliant with GDPR. The pseudonymised research data will be made available to the Department for Education (DfE) but they will not have access to any individual interview summaries, names, email addresses, telephone numbers and other identifying details of participants. The collated research findings will be published in a research report but none of your personal data will be included in the report.

Your right to withdraw consent

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Refusal to participate will not affect you in any

way. If you do agree to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time: there will not be any consequence of this. You have the right to withdraw from the study completely and decline any further contact by study staff after you withdraw. However, you will not be able to withdraw your responses (if they are used in any research reports) after the findings from the research have been published.

If you take part in an online focus group and inform us that you wish to withdraw from the research we will not use your response in the research, but we will not be able to delete your responses from the transcript of the session.

How long we will keep your personal data?

We will retain your pseudonymised data for ten years in accordance with the University of Warwick retention requirements for research data. If you take part in a telephone interview and consent to it being audio recorded, the audio recording will be held for one year after the publication of the final report and any related journal publications and then securely deleted. Your contact data will be deleted as soon as is practicable after the end of the project.

Your data protection rights

Under certain circumstances, you have the right:

- To ask us for access to information about you that we hold;
- To have your personal data rectified, if it is inaccurate or incomplete;
- To request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing;
- To restrict our processing of your personal data (i.e. permitting its storage but no further processing); to object to direct marketing (including profiling) and processing for the purposes of scientific/historical research and statistics;
- Not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated decision-making.

If you need to contact us regarding any of the above, please email the University of Warwick's Data Protection Officer at infocompliance@warwick.ac.uk. For further details see Data Subject Rights.

Your right to complain

If you are unhappy with our use of your personal data, please let us know by contacting:

Head of Research Governance
Research & Impact Services
University House
University of Warwick
Coventry
CV4 8UW

Email: researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk

You can also contact the Department for Education's Data Protection Officer via gov.uk by marking your correspondence as for the attention of the 'DPO'.

Alternatively, you have the right to raise any concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) via their website at concerns.

If you are happy to take part in the research please complete the consent and sign-up form [here](#).



Contact us

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EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



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