

For immediate release

02 February 2012

Tuition fees are not an issue for young people as desire to attend university remains high

Research reveals that young people appear not to be deterred by rising University costs and are more focussed on the quality of the course and future employment opportunities

Recent YouGov research has found that the desire of young people to attend university is not on the wane, as recent high profile media coverage would suggest, with 80% of 16-18 year olds still wanting to study at university.

The survey of 1,055 young people, aged between 16 and 20, has found that 69% of 16 to 20 year olds want to study at university. Of those young people who were unsure or did not want to go to university at the moment, 21% said they were likely to go to university sometime in the future.

Just over a quarter of young people surveyed (27%) agreed that 'they wanted to go to university but could not afford it'. Young people still believe in the longer term financial benefits of a university education and feel that the trade-off between a higher income and higher debts is a deal worth doing. Sixty eight per cent of young people surveyed agreed that 'I know I will leave university with debts but the benefits in getting a higher paid job make up for this'. While by the time they reach 35 years of age, over half (54%) expect to earn a lot more than people who did not go to university.

The YouGov survey of young people also found that the most important factors in deciding what university to attend are: the reputation of the university for high quality teaching (79%), the appropriateness of the course (72%) and the ability to move into a well-paid job at the end of the course (67%). Only 37% of young people feel that it is important that fees should be less than the maximum of £9,000 per year.

Recent UCAS figures and our survey of young people indicate that the intention to have a university education remains strong in the 16-18 year old cohort. However, while the fears around the impact of increased fees appear to be less of a concern for young people, there is widespread disapproval with the Governments policy to increase the cap on tuition fees to £9,000 - three quarters (75%) of 16-20 years olds surveyed disapproved of this policy.

There is positive news for the university sector as our research suggests that young people still value a university education. Only 20% of 16-20 years olds agree that 'a university education is over-rated' and just 13% feel that 'they will benefit more from going into work after school than going to university'.

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

Figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.

Total sample size was 1055 GB young adults aged 16-20 years old. Fieldwork was undertaken 20th December 2011 and 6th January 2012. The survey was carried out online with figures weighted to be nationally representative.

The research also collected data on young people's willingness to spend and explored the trade-off between university choices and the level of fees.

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YouGov is considered a pioneer of online market research and has a panel of 2.5 million people worldwide, including over 350,000 people in the UK representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types.

As the most quoted market research agency in the UK, YouGov has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the accuracy of its survey methods.

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