

MYTH: I will struggle to find a job if I don't study the 'right' subject

Most undergraduate degree courses take three years of full-time study, so it's important to choose a subject you want to spend that much time on.

A recent survey revealed that two thirds of applicants are anxious about making the 'right' subject choice for their future career. That's understandable when it's such a big commitment.

It might reassure you though to hear that the subject you study isn't always what makes you most employable.

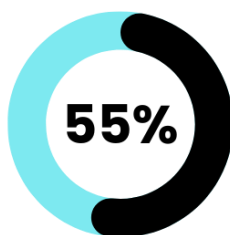
2/3

Of university applicants feel anxious or very anxious about making the 'right' subject choice for their future career.

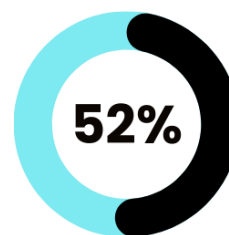
Some recent research asked employers about the top three factors they considered important when recruiting graduates:



Valued a graduate's enthusiasm and positive attitude



Valued skills and attributes outside of academic knowledge

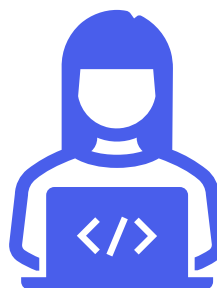


Valued relevant subject knowledge

Source: CBI Economics, University Alliance, *To What Degree? Understanding what employers look for in graduates*, 2024

Choose your route

Of course, certain subjects set you on a direct path for particular jobs or sectors – engineering or nursing might be specific examples – but there are plenty of employers who are looking more widely for graduate-level skills. At the application and screening stage of recruitment, **90% of graduate employers said that skills and competencies other than specific academic knowledge were important.**



Engineering and nursing are examples of careers that do normally require you to study a specific subject.

Or keep your options open

Data shows that, in general, graduates are highly employable.

For those who graduated in 2021/22:



Were in work or further study just 15 months after graduating.







Of those in work or further study agreed that what they were doing was 'meaningful.'

...across all subjects.

Prepare for success

When current university students were asked about how their studies were preparing them for employment, **83% agreed that their course has developed knowledge and skills that they think they will need for their future.** That's a majority across all subjects. University level study is a great way to develop a wide range of skills such as:

-  Critical thinking
-  Problem solving
-  Communication
-  Time management

Those are skills you'll develop and be able to show evidence of, whatever course you choose.

Get some hands-on experience

An additional aspect worth considering is that statistic above about employers liking applicants with relevant work or project experience. A recent study found **42% of university graduates did a work or industry placement** as part of their course and, of these, **89% found the placement helpful for getting employment**.

So, look out for courses which provide opportunities to get involved with practical experiences such as projects designed by local employers or which offer work placements.

Plans can change

Remember, it may well be possible to switch courses if you get to university and then decide a different subject would suit you better. You can always speak to your tutors about that.

Overall though, **you might be surprised where different subjects can take you.** Search for subject guides on the UCAS website for information, and good luck with making your choice!

What do you think?

Do you have a specific career in mind, or are you looking for a degree that will leave your options open? Which subject do you enjoy most? If there are questions you'd still like the answer to, find UniMythsBusted online and let us know!