

Essay structure



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The reality that an alarming number of qualified school leavers will not get spaces at universities in the United Kingdom has left many in shock. This could have serious implications for students who have long held dreams of acquiring university education. These students are left with the option of missing out on university education entirely or finding alternative means of acquiring this much sought after education. I will explore the reasons that have resulted in this crisis in the United Kingdom's higher education learning system.

I will also offer a study abroad alternative to students who still wish to acquire a university education. Finally, I will explore the advantages of this study option in comparison to universities in the United Kingdom. One factor that has contributed to this crisis is basically a demand and supply crisis. I intend to discuss how the cuts on government funding have affected the uptake of students who have completed their A-levels. I will explore in detail how the announcement by the Coalition of a two hundred million pound cut from the higher education budget has reduced the number of available spaces at the universities.

In contrast, reports indicate that there has been a sharp increase in the number of students who made applications to universities. This increase in applications is taking place at a time when universities are planning to cut places available to British and European Union students. I will also discuss how the threat that faces universities for recruiting above the specified number of students of hefty fines guarantees that they will not admit extra students. These universities face fines of up to three thousand seven hundred pounds for each student above targets.

The plans by government to introduce new graduate taxes which will inevitably result in a rise in fees will give more students enough motivation to reassess their study options. Interestingly, universities have not reduced their intake of foreign students (Tony, 2010). Many universities have more places available to foreign students than British students and in other cases places are only available to foreigners. This is because foreign students are charged higher fees and are a source of profitable funding for the universities. I will also point out the alternative option of abroad study available to students.

Students in the United Kingdom have over the years displayed a reluctance to study elsewhere, I will analyse this option in detail. I will highlight how the United Kingdom's strong economy has made it a historic importer of students and labour rather than an exporter. This has resulted in attracting high quality academics and excellent standards. This has undoubtedly led to the reluctance by students to leave the United Kingdom due to the presence of institutions with established reputations like Cambridge and Oxford for academic excellence.

To further support the option of studying abroad I will examine the benefits it offers. One advantage is the potential savings of several thousand pounds for students studying at reputable universities elsewhere in the European Union (Morgan, 2010). This would appeal to British students who expect to graduate with twenty five thousand pounds of debt (Morgan, 2010). I will also discuss the QS World University Rankings which indicate that many universities in the United Kingdom continue to perform better than others across the continent.

However, many institutions across Europe outperform UK universities in specific subject areas. The University of Amsterdam which is ranked position thirty two worldwide for social sciences has been placed above all UK universities except Cambridge, University College of London and Oxford. They offer these courses at significantly reduced costs compared to universities in the UK. The exciting opportunity for a deeper cultural appreciation presented by abroad study will also be analysed.

The acquisition of new language skills, increased cultural awareness and how this will serve to set the student apart in the competitive job market will be discussed. I will also point out the advantage one gains by acquiring an impressive portfolio of contacts. Finally I would include the QS World University Rankings, 2009 in the appendices. Written Evidence The numbers of students who will miss university places is alarming. Due to the stiff competition for these places even qualified students will miss out on the much coveted university positions. The vice-chancellor of Worcester University, Prof David Green commented that:

“ I think there will be many tens of thousands of young people, in particular young people with good A-levels, who will just miss out on the university offer made to them, meaning they won't get a place. My earlier prediction that there will be around 220, 000 unhappy people will be about right. Of those, about 100, 000 will be pretty well qualified and motivated students who would have been accepted in previous years. ” (Graeme, 2010, p. 7)

This implies that an increased number of students will have to seek university education elsewhere or risk missing out on it altogether (Hannah, 2010).

This has left many students confused and unsure about their fate. Aaron Porter the president of the National Union of Students said that these youth were " facing a very uncertain future. " He recommended that these students would have to review other options that may be available to them. The Universities Minister, Mr. Willets said that he felt ' sorry' for the students who had missed university places at the universities of their choice and advised them to lower their sights. This is a very disappointing situation for the thousands of students who studied very hard to pass their examinations.

The government proposals for graduate taxes will also increase the already high fees paid by students in the United Kingdom (Clark, 2010). These have been subject to public outcry and political debate. A contender for Labour Party leadership, Mr. Miliband commented that: " They are attacking the poorest people in our society through VAT, attacking people on benefits, attacking people in the public sector and making a series of cuts well beyond what Labour would have done and in a way which is cavalier in terms of what it means for society. " (Tony, 2010, p.

15) Universities are also cutting back on the admission of local students in favour of international ones. These students are also not subject to the stringent requirements of grades or restriction in places offered at the universities. In a report, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education termed that this increase in foreign students was ' unsustainable, 'due to various complications that arose. Sally Hunt, the University and College Union secretary urged the Business Secretary to exercise caution in the introduction of graduate taxes:

“ We urge Vince Cable to look again at the idea of taxing big business for the substantial benefit it gains from a plentiful supply of graduates, rather than merely looking to penalise students further. ” (David, 2010, p. 24).

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