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Choose the right course at the right University

Providing Transparent and Unbiased Information for Students

or

How Accessible and Relevant Information Can Help Social Mobility

Steven Edwards – bestcours4me.com

Two Sections

- Why information matters for students, particularly for social mobility
- How bestCourse4me is trying to help

Why Provide Information?

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- Research, (e.g. Sutton Trust) and many solid anecdotes show poor understanding of the benefits of a degree
  - income
  - employability
  - career prospects
  - soft benefits (job satisfaction, happiness, fulfilling dreams)
- Big disadvantage of a degree - DEBT

Why is Understanding so Poor?

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Students from educationally deprived backgrounds may have

- No family background in education
- Social group has low education and success
- Little support from schools
- Inadequate and damaging advice – GCSE, A level and degree choices
  - Careers advisors
  - Family

No Blame

No Blame

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- Accurate factual information is very difficult to find
- If you don’t have a degree it is hard to grasp the benefits
- Many close knit social groups believe in staying in the group and the geographical area
- Careers advisors have a very broad scope to cover

How Information Helps

Set expectations and give concrete benefits:

- Income benefits (avg 72% higher pay)
- Career access (most programmers have a numerate degree)
- Course choice (know where courses lead)
- Institution choice (smaller effect than subject)

Better information fits students to courses better

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www.bestcourse4me.com

Why another web site?

- We provide information and **comparisons** on subjects and subsequent careers, employability and wages
- We plan to provide information on A levels to read a subject at the university you want
- We hope to provide costs and bursary data
- All unmodified data from HESA and the Labour Force Survey
- No other site does this

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bestCourse4me.com – Choose my Career

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CAREER SUBJECT UNI

Search architectural

You've selected

Results showing 7 results

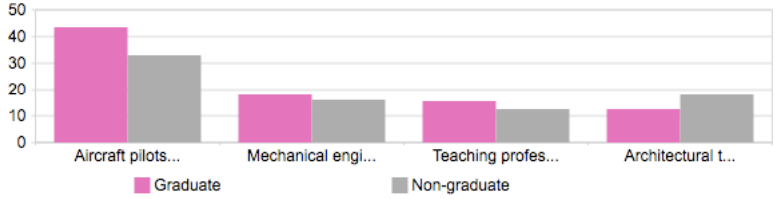
- Architectural technologists and town planning technicians — Career 3121
- Bricklayers, masons — Career 5312
- Architects — Career 2431
- Carpenters and joiners — Career 5315
- Managers and proprietors in other services n.e.c. — Career 1239

Favourites

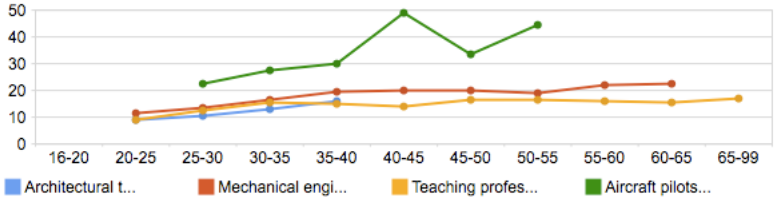
Print Comparison

Aircraft pilots and ... | Mechanical engineers | Teaching professiona... | Architectural techno...

Average hourly pay: Last year

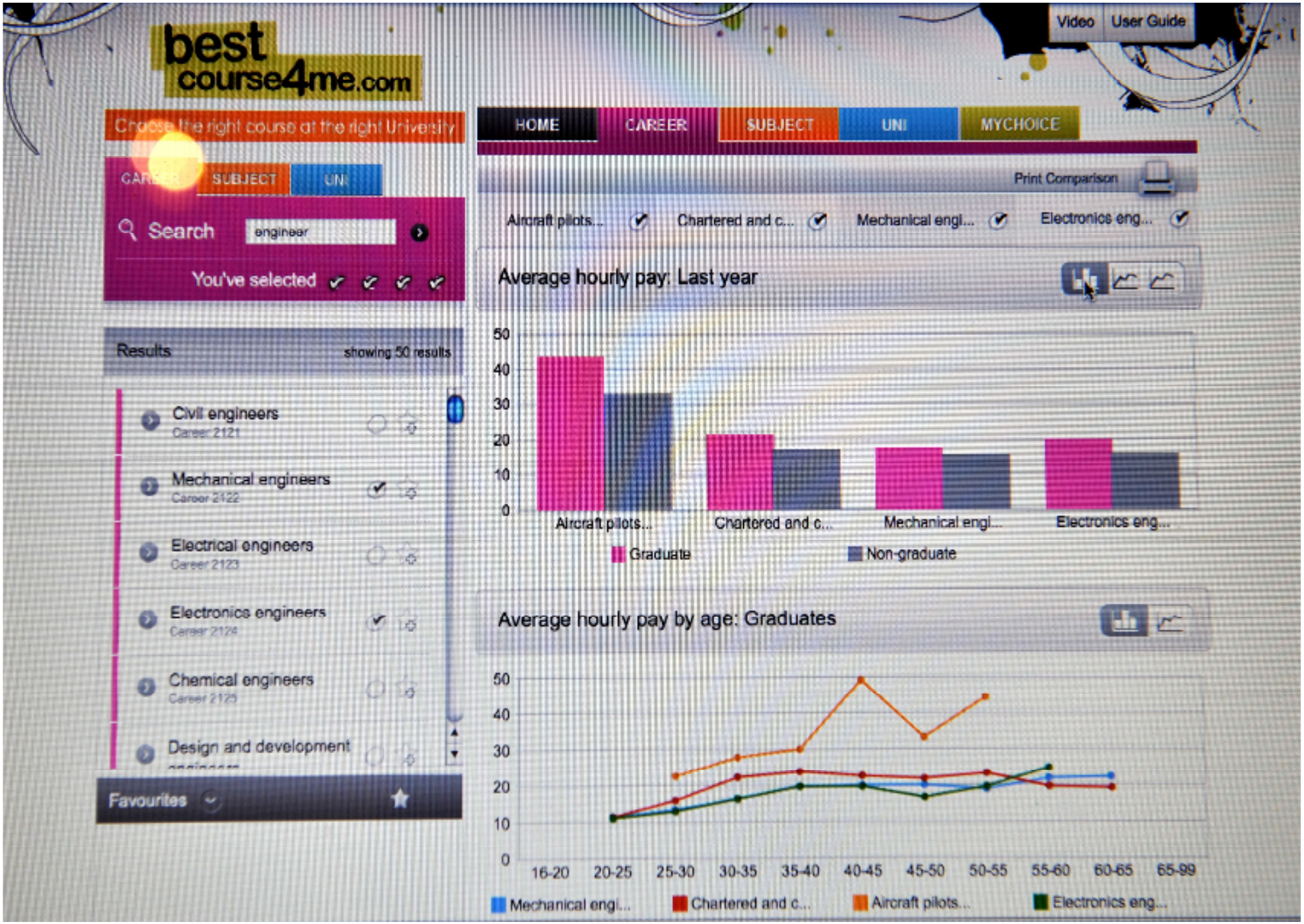


Average hourly pay by age: Graduates



Proportion who are graduates: Last year

Transferring data from www.bestcourse4me.com...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Search
engineer
Aircraft pilots...
Chartered and c...
Mechanical engi...
Electronics eng...
You've selected
Average hourly pay: Last year
Results
showing 50 results
50
40
30
20
10
0
Aircraft pilots...
Chartered and c...
Mechanical engi...
Electronics eng...
Graduate
Non-graduate
Civil engineers
Career 2121
Mechanical engineers
Career 2122
Electrical engineers
Career 2123
Electronics engineers
Career 2124
Chemical engineers
Career 2125
Design and development
Average hourly pay by age: Graduates
Favourites
50
40
30
20
10
0
16-20
20-25
25-30
30-35
35-40
40-45
45-50
50-55
55-60
60-65
65-99
Mechanical engi...
Chartered and c...
Aircraft pilots...
Electronics eng...

General Examples

- Some subjects are very valuable for particular jobs – pilots have engineering or physical sciences degrees
- Some non-traditional subjects have very good employment rates in related careers – 62% of landscape design in industry after 6m
- Highly numerate and (scientifically) analytical subjects tend to lead to high pay and higher employability

Mark up from arts degree – Men

Sloane and O'Leary 2004

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Subjects	Mark-up from Arts	Rank
Accountancy	42.15%	1
Electrical engineering	40.73%	2
Maths and computing	37.23%	3
Mechanical engineering	33.71%	4
Social sciences	14.20%	21
History	11.69%	22
English	10.84%	23
Sociology	10.83%	24

Physicists get Everywhere

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- Business And Statistical Professionals 8.7%
- Teaching Professionals 6.9%
- Business And Finance Associate Professionals 6.6%
- Sales Assistants And Retail Cashiers 5.8%
- Information And Communication Technology Professionals 5.8%
- Administrative Occupations: General 5.8%
- Engineering Professionals 5.3%
- Science Professionals 4.9%
- Research Professionals 4.1%
- Science And Engineering Technicians 4.0%

Dance Graduates Get Jobs

- Dance graduates from Bath Spa have a 2.2% unemployment rate after 6m (but a £14,000 salary)
- 3 times as many journalists have English degrees as have journalism degrees
- 31% of journalism graduates have a job in the media within 6 months.

Summary

- Students need accurate and relevant information
- Tuition fees increase the need for information
- Better course selection by students (and better A level selection)
- Fewer able students miss university – better social mobility
- No subjective information – all unmassaged statistics

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