

1.

**‘Only people with lots of money can afford to go to uni.’**

Consider the cost of course fees. If you’re a Scottish citizen and study in Scotland you don’t have to pay fees, but if you decide to study in England, Wales or Northern Ireland you could be paying up to £9,000 per year (course fees will vary between institutions).

Things to remember:

- Full-time students are exempt from council tax
- The NUS Extra Card can often get you discounts on goods
- In an emergency, most universities will also offer a discretionary fund of a few hundred pounds for day-to-day living expenses.

2.

**‘Jobs in oil and gas are just for men.’**

Women currently make up 21% of the oil and gas workers in Britain. ‘Despite women outperforming men in science subjects at virtually every level, many women are still put off from entering the sector,’ says Annette Williams, Director of the U.K. Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology.

Salaries for graduates can start at around £34K to £36K in roles as varied as engineer, geologist and lawyer.

**It might be worth thinking again about that...**

3.

**‘You can’t change your career.’**

Martin Hunt discovered his perfect career by accident.

‘I was working in land management and a famous celebrity bought a property in the north of Scotland,’ he says. ‘The press were hounding us for details and my business partner asked me to deal with it. I said that the property had been purchased, but I was careful not to say who bought it or for how much.’

This was when Martin discovered his flair for PR. ‘PR is very much about diplomacy and I realised then that was what I wanted to do for living.’

28 years later, Martin is the managing director of PR firm Tartan Silk.

4.

### **‘There’s no point in doing a temporary job as you’ll be out of work again in a few months.’**

‘Any short-term opportunity, whether it’s Christmas work, a work placement, or a temporary contract, can mean valuable experience for a jobseeker,’ says Careers Adviser Heather Livingston.

‘Even if it’s not the specific job you want, at the very least it’s a great way to make contacts. You’ll also be able to offer a recent reference to potential employers and generally it shows that you’re keen to find work.’

Any job you do will help you develop transferable or employability skills – from becoming a better communicator, to team working and problem solving, to time management.

5.

### **‘People who work in finance just have to use maths all day.’**

There’s much more to the finance industry than just numbers. There are many different ways into the industry - whether you’re straight out of school, or a graduate.

‘You could work in HR, project management, marketing or a more technical area such as accounting, finance and operations,’ says Alan Thornburrow from Scottish Investment Operations, who promote the industry.

Need some examples? Alexandra Hope got into the industry straight from school and works as a customer service representative, answering inquiries by phone and email. Kara Gilroy studied Law and started as a graduate in HR, and deals with people, not numbers.

6.

### **‘Modern Apprenticeships are only for people who don’t get into uni.’**

Modern Apprenticeships are a great alternative option to uni or college. In fact, many MAs take that route because learning on the job suits them better than lectures - and they get money in their pocket, too.

Miriam Ahmed got accepted for university but was keen to go straight into work after school. She found an accounting Modern Apprenticeship with Qualitrol LLC. Now, the company is supporting her as she works through accounting exams.

‘At the moment, I’m learning at about the same pace as someone who would have started uni when I left school, but I also have the practical experience to back me up,’ she says.

7.

### **‘Modern Apprenticeships are just for people who want to learn a trade, like plumbing.’**

Ross had signed up for a Modern Apprenticeship in IT through the school before he got his results and then completed the paperwork (after a bit of nagging from his aunt). He was accepted and started his apprenticeship with Glasgow City Council in September 2009.

*‘I was kept on after my two year apprenticeship finished. I started with a temporary contract as an IT Support Analyst and then luckily I was made permanent.’*

**There are loads of Modern Apprenticeship opportunities across Scotland, covering everything from horticulturist to fitness instructor. It’s not just about traditional trades any more.**

8.

### **‘Jobs in IT are just for geeks.’**

‘IBM is calling this ‘the decade of smart’, and is always looking for people who can help make the world a smarter planet,’ says Linda O’Donoghue, a senior director at IBM, ‘it’s a very exciting time to be in the IT industry.’

*‘New recruits need to be able to swap their technical hat for their creative hat, and think about problem-solving as a whole. People who are also able to think and act across multi-disciplines.’*

Disciplines can be anything from logistics, manufacturing and science, to agriculture, design, and engineering. The list is endless, as technology plays a part across all industries.

9.

### **‘Employers just want people who have degrees.’**

Getting the job you want can take time.

Very few people land their dream career straight out of school, college or university.

Further and higher education can help you to gain skills and qualifications relevant to what you do, but working your way up within an organisation through a Modern Apprenticeship or a company training scheme can be another worthwhile approach.

Do some research into the industry you’re interested in. Are there junior positions you could apply for? Starting at the bottom will allow you to not only develop your skills, but make valuable industry contacts.

10.

### **‘Money’s the most important thing when you’re looking for a job.’**

We spend almost a third of our lives at work. If you love your job it’s going to have a positive effect on the rest of your life. On the other hand, if you don’t enjoy what you do for a living, you could spend a good portion of your time feeling unhappy.

People are often drawn to working in fast-paced and exciting industries such as fashion, music and the media.

However, jobs in these industries might be competitive and relatively low paid.

**For many, job satisfaction is about work that allows you to play to your strengths and is rewarding. For others, the job itself is less important than having friendly colleagues and a sociable workplace.**