

## Is University a waste of money?

Presented by Tina Dehaley

**Tina Dehaley:** There was a time when a University degree more or less guaranteed a good career and a respectable salary. But is that still the case? There are now more young people graduating from University in the UK than ever before, but it seems like there just aren't enough graduate jobs to go round.

Of course, there are many professional careers where a University degree is essential, for example teaching, medicine, law. But there are many other areas where, a University degree isn't the only route available.

Meet Fionnuala and Chris. When they were leaving school, they both wanted to be accountants, but they both chose different routes.

**Chris Diamond:** Hi I'm Chris and I'm a trainee accountant at PWC. Doing a degree gave me the opportunity to become a lot more independent and mature as a person before I entered the world of work. The social life was brilliant as well, in Belfast, and I also had the opportunity to take part in the All-Ireland Freshers Football Championship.

Coming out of University gave me quite a lot of student debt, but that's part and parcel of any undergraduate course these days. Overall going to University was a great decision. It's a decision I'd make again in a heartbeat.

**Tina Dehaley:** So Chris followed the traditional route into Accountancy ...but is there another way to get there?

**Fionnuala McElroy:** Hi I'm Fionnuala and I'm an accountant at PWC. I Joined PWC straight after finishing my A levels, and I was one of their first Higher Apprentices. I did have offers for University, but when I looked into it, I decided that this was the better route for me. Earning a salary and no student debt was really appealing. There's a huge focus on social life and we constantly organise social events after work. I definitely feel like the Higher Apprenticeship route was the better option for me.

**Tina Dehaley:** That's just one example of how there can be many routes to take you to your chosen career. It's worth remembering that while there are short term financial gains from not going to University, most economists still agree that over the course of a working lifetime, graduates will earn more, on average, than non-graduates.