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Graduates need to be empowered to create jobs, not just look for them, says ABE

Awarding body says that teaching a more holistic skillset will ensure more graduates secure high-quality work

Official figures published this week that show a decrease in the number of graduates in skilled work are indicative of a need for more young people to be empowered to forge their own career paths, rather than always following a pre-defined route. This is according to global non-profit organisation and awarding body [ABE](#).

The [figures](#) have revealed a 2.2 per cent year-on-year decline in the number of 21 to 30-year-old graduates in skilled work, with around one in five graduates in low or medium skilled jobs on average across the entire working population. In an era where there appears to be too many graduates and not enough jobs to match their skillset, a solution lies in fostering an evolution in culture when it comes to new graduates entering the employment market.

Gareth Robinson, CEO of ABE, said: “Unions are right when they talk about there being a danger of wasting the talent of young graduates. Despite notable improvements in the economy, many graduates are still struggling to get onto the career ladder when they leave university.

“This highlights a flaw in the graduate job-hunting culture in the UK. On the whole, university leavers are encouraged to follow traditional routes into employment after securing their degree, with graduate schemes often seen as a benchmark for kick-starting a successful career. This has led to an increasingly congested marketplace as the number of graduates increases.”

To help ease this problem, ABE believes that more needs to be done to help graduates build unique skills both before and during university. These skills will enable young people to create new jobs, and not just fill positions that already exist.

Robinson added: “To make themselves competitive, graduates often need something extra to make themselves stand out from the crowd. Working towards gaining supplementary business skills or qualifications can go a long way towards providing this. For entrepreneurs in particular, building these competencies and a sense of confidence will enable ambitious graduates to blaze their own career trail.”

In addition, while efforts by the government to reform the higher education system so that students develop a wider range of skills are welcome, ABE believes that this reactive approach is not an effective one for the long term.

Robinson concluded: “Efforts are underway to help ensure young people gain a wider range of business-relevant skills while at university. This is a welcome change, but these reforms should be proactively integrated more comprehensively into the education system, both before and during university. In this way, graduates stand a much better chance of joining the workforce on their own terms.”

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About The Association of Business Executives (ABE)

ABE is a not-for-profit awarding body accredited by Ofqual. Established in 1973, it has an international footprint with key markets in the UK, Africa, the Caribbean, SE Asia and China. ABE develops business and management Diploma qualifications at QCF Levels 4-7. Its qualifications provide progression routes to Bachelors degree and Masters programmes worldwide.

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