

Australian University Experience

The rise in the number of Australian university graduates who struggle to find work after graduating, with particular reference to:

Degree: Computer Science

1. the state of the entry-level job market for graduates;

I have extensive personal projects that are in presentable condition (visual projects with recordings on youtube). Then my brother brought me to a tech meetup and I managed to convince someone to let me talk to their CEO (largish startup company). Then I interviewed for a while and got an internship even though they don't normally take interns. I proved that I could work without too much supervision (their time is expensive) and provide value (now or as an investment later). Applying to jobs online feels useless and demotivating so I'm very glad I pretty much skipped doing that. Startups are willing to spend whatever money hiring people (to grow as quickly as possible) as long as you make it painless and don't waste their time. Ironically if you start recommending that people apply to startups, then there's too many people and it will become MORE painful for the company. So I guess invest/make more startups? Online job applications are basically useless for employees AND students since AI and desperate/scummy people flood everything (again, painful).

2. the quality of university education in Australia;

The first year is very good, the second year is still alright with some good courses but started to show cracks, but by my third year I don't really care about the courses anymore. The knowledge and projects that got me the job were started when I was in high school so idk if I can comment on this much. I wish there was way less homework because its always on my mind and kills the momentum on my personal projects / life.

3. whether graduates of Australian universities are being taught the skills that employers are looking for;

I think we learn relatively practical things which is good. Maybe more self-guided stuff but most people can't handle too much of that.

4. the state of affairs in comparable jurisdictions;

People might go on exchange but most people don't really care about doing uni in other countries. If they want to fly really high they might go to America or European universities but they would be risking/paying a lot. The risk is basically nothing if you're going to university locally, reward is better than 95% of global universities.

5. the economic, social and psychological effect that this experience has on graduates; and

Uni homework bleeds into personal time in a terrible way. Even if I don't care about the marks, it still hangs over my head and subconsciously makes me want to avoid commitments and opportunities. Once I started interning and studying at the same time, I genuinely stopped caring about university and became SUBSTANTIALLY more social and open to events / commitments. Neglecting coursework was probably thing I did at uni.

Uni is also very bad for socialising. Most people go home immediately after classes or don't even show up at all. The remaining people on campus are disproportionately international students since they want to make the most of their time here and probably live nearby. Unfortunately very few international students can speak English in any entertaining way. So in reality people are extremely insular and stay with their high school friends. Even when you do meet other domestic students, it can awkwardly fizzle out when you realise you're from different train lines. Travel time adds a massive amount of friction to any budding relationship, people need to go home, nothing can be spontaneous. Also everyone has assignments / exams / classes at different times so its impossible to organise anything even if you wanted to.

Unfortunately my friend group has a similar mentality around homework so they are always pushing away any real life meetups or opportunities but are usually available for phone calls / texting etc. you really have to "sneak in" a meetup or temporarily throw uni to the wind. Also all this alone time and insular thinking has led to all kinds of extremism and "chronically online" behaviour in myself and a lot of people I know. It is complete whiplash comparing the tightknit community of Australians in Year 12 vs the insular and alien years of university. Extremely easy to be radicalised in that process. Even the most progressive people I know get angry when they deal with international students in group projects. It doesn't matter what ethnicity the domestic student is either, a lot of people become more self hating or hating other people which is sad but that's how it is. Even worse knowing that all your online job applications and networking events are drowned out / competing with them.

6. any other related matters

I was thinking about this a while ago, we should really have university campus towns. Way more social, would reduce the burden of international/domestic students on cities (housing cost etc), jobs for people to move out of cities, cheaper living for young people, and we could be way more affordable than America. Even if HECS debt didn't cover the housing costs etc (that might be too generous) it would still be a good idea to give young people the option to live a real uni experience (I hate saying it like that but its true). ATAR/UAC/preferences would be matter way more if it could get you access to dorm rooms etc because anything 85+ is basically the same for most people.