

# Students put parties above jobs in hunt for university

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FORGET a university's academic reputation or the chances of getting a good job after graduation. Prospective students really want to know how good the nightclubs are.

Undergraduates rated the quality of nightlife the second most important factor in their

choice of university, according to a survey published yesterday. Half of current students said that they chose their course on the basis of the social life at the university or in its surroundings.

The survey of 136 graduates and undergraduates for the University of Hertfordshire found that all of them rated the quality of their courses as

the most important factor in their choices.

Party-conscious undergraduates placed "nightlife" as their second most important reason for choosing a particular university. The presumably more sober and responsible graduates, now pursuing their careers, claimed that clubbing and nights in the pub had been only the fourth most

important reason for their choice of university.

However, one in ten of all those questioned admitted that they had been so impressed by the social scene when they first visited their universities, that they would have changed their chosen course to get in.

Undergraduates rated the quality of shopping offered in the surrounding town or city as the sixth most important factor, ahead of the cost of living and just behind the "kudos" of the university. Among graduates, shopping came last.

Graduates rated the university's reputation and facilities as the most important factors in their choices, after the quality of the course. Undergraduates considered the university's reputation the fifth most important reason for their choices, behind the facilities it offered and the location.

The study identified increased concern about the cost of going to university. Only 19 per cent of graduates who obtained their degrees before 1998, when tuition fees were introduced, cited a university's distance from home and the cost of living as factors in their decisions.

But 35 per cent of more recent graduates said they looked at the universities closest to home to cut expenses, while 28 per cent said the cost of living had been an important issue.

Another survey claims that nearly two thirds of young graduates can not afford to buy their own homes. Soaring house prices mean that 63 per cent of under-30s with a university degree do not own their own property. Ten per cent say they can not even imagine being able to get on to the property ladder.

Expensive property is not just an issue for recent graduates. A fifth of those who left university more than six years ago say they also despair at ever being able to buy their own home.

[www.timesonline.co.uk/education](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/education)  
The Good University Guide

## HOW STUDENTS CHOOSE SCHOOLS

### Graduates

1. Quality of course
2. Kudos of university
3. Facilities at university
4. Quality of nightlife
5. Look of location
6. Close to home
7. Cost of living in area
8. History of the university
9. Quality of shopping
10. Popular culture

### Current undergraduates

1. Quality of course
2. Quality of nightlife
3. Facilities at university
4. Look of location
5. Kudos of university
6. Quality of shopping
7. Close to home
8. Popular culture
9. Cost of living in area
10. History of the university