

Step 3 Pitfalls when choosing a new study programme

There are several pitfalls to be aware of when choosing a course of study. Read through the list below and see if any of the pitfalls apply to you.

Haste

To get rid of the feeling of uncertainty, you may be tempted to make a choice too quickly. Bear in mind that haste is rarely good! Making a good choice takes time. It can be frustrating to encounter the same doubts in a new study programme and having to go through the selection process again.

Procrastination

When you have difficulty making a choice, it's tempting to postpone it until after your summer holiday. That's a bit on the late side though and the chance that you're choosing too hastily is also present. Another form of postponement is choosing a general, broad education that still offers many options. But even within these programmes, there comes a time when you must make choices. There is nothing wrong with choosing a broad education as long as you are aware of it.

Self-evident

It is common to take things for granted, such as that high grades automatically mean that you need to attend university. Or that a Master's degree programme is suited for you, just because you obtained your Bachelor's diploma. It may well be that one form of education is better suited to you than the other. It may also be the case that if you only look at part of the education on offer, you may miss out on an education that suits you well. So, don't take this for granted!

The perfect study programme

The perfect study programme does not exist! There will always be a part of your study programme that you don't like as much. But of course, the majority of the programme should suit you.

Pros and cons

It doesn't work just to examine a list of studies and to cross out the ones you don't like until there is one left: then you are not choosing for one study, but against the others! Put the consequences side by side and examine your motivation.

Life experience

If you want to take a year off, you are often told that it is not wise to do so, because you will get out of the study rhythm. By listening to this advice, you could miss out on an interesting experience. Taking a year off from studying and travelling and/or working instead can provide you with a lot of self-knowledge.

Pushing boundaries

Do you only look at the education offered in your own area? Then you might miss out on a fantastic education that really matches your interests! Experience shows that when you really want something, you are more willing to do it. Studying abroad can also be very interesting to investigate.

Breaking traditions

It seems easy to stay within the established (family) paths. 'My grandfather and mother are doctors too' or 'My entire family is in the business' are often heard arguments in favour of choosing a profession. However, remember that every person is different and that your interest should be the deciding factor.

Choose what your parents want

If you let your parents determine your choice of study, it may not be the one that suits you. It is, of course, good to listen to your parents' advice, but you are the one who is going to follow the study, it concerns your future.

Hobby and profession

The best thing is if you can turn your hobby into your profession, but perhaps you are holding back from making a choice on this basis because you have doubts about the opportunities on the labour market. In that case, remember that your motivation and interest in the chosen course or profession are very important factors for the success of your later career!

Exercise:

What pitfalls do you recognise?

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Discuss it with your parents, a mentor or a teacher. What comes up?

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