

Task 2 questions

In addition to writing about a single question or statement, there are other types of task you may have to deal with.

1 To what extent do you agree?

1 Read the Writing task below. What does the statement in the task mean?

- Graduates should get work before they do a second degree.
- Graduates should continue studying if they cannot find a job they want.
- Graduates with second degrees are usually over-qualified for their first jobs.

Write about the following topic.

Graduates who cannot find work in their chosen field should be advised to do a second degree, rather than taking a job that does not interest them.

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

To what extent means 'how much?'. You can agree completely or disagree completely, or you can present both sides of the argument.

2 Read the sample answer on the right and complete this plan for the essay.

para. 1	introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Reasons why this happens Depends on situation
para. 2	main idea supporting idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying for university Supported by 2 or a loan Not good to continue like this
para. 3	main idea supporting idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough 3 May have to wait or start at bottom of 4 Has advantages, e.g. my father
para. 4	main idea supporting idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 5 for some people Good idea in today's 6
para. 5	conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult 7 Only good advice if part of your career 8

Sample answer

These days, it can be difficult to get a good job when you leave university. Many more students are studying for degrees, so the job market is very competitive. Some people believe that it is better to take a second degree if you cannot secure suitable employment. But I tend to think it depends on your circumstances.

State your position in the introductory paragraph.

The first consideration is finance. Universities charge high fees for their courses, and in some countries it can cost up to £25,000 to do a first degree. Although some students are fortunate in that their parents can fund their studies, many others have to borrow the money and then repay it when they start working. In my view, it is not a good idea to recommend that these students continue this situation, particularly if they have no real desire to study further.

Make sure the sentences in each paragraph follow each other logically.

I think we now have to accept that there are not always enough jobs to go round. So the second consideration is that it might be better to be patient, start at the bottom and work your way up the career ladder. This is what my father did, and it definitely gave him a fuller understanding of his chosen field.

Give a personal example if it is relevant to your main idea.

On the other hand, a second degree may be a natural progression for students who wish to enter a certain profession or to pursue a research-based career. If they can afford the course without getting into debt, it may be advisable for them to carry on with their studies, especially in the current economic climate.

Ultimately, the decision may be a difficult one. However, I feel that those who do not really want to continue studying or cannot afford it should not be encouraged to do so. Unless you had already planned to do a postgraduate course, it could turn out to be much better if you start working, whatever the status or salary.

Write a final concluding paragraph that sums up your points and re-states your position.

3 Read the sample answer again.

- How does the writer link the second and third paragraphs?
- What discourse marker does the writer use to signal that he is moving on to a counter-argument?