

Question #1: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

It is better to have broad knowledge of many academic subjects than to specialize in one specific subject.

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Response #1:

I think that the question to either have a broad knowledge of a variety of subjects or to have a good and specialised understanding in one subject is a difficult one. I agree with both of the points to some extent. First of all, it is important for a younger student to have a broad knowledge of many subjects. Schools, in particular primary and secondary schools should try and give their students a broader overview of many subjects. This is also important in the younger years of a students life, because most of the students have not decided what they will do in their future life. They are not really sure what they are really interested in and what area they want to specialize. When it comes to secondary schools, students should be given their first choices, based on the knowledge they have already obtained. They should be able to limit their subject choice and cut down on the number of areas where they have to study in. Of course, this would also result in deepening the knowledge in the subjects chosen. When it comes to the last two to three years of school for students, they should be given lessons in only the six to seven areas they are really interested in. Whereas, I think that certain subjects do not even have to be taken. Currently, Mathematics, German, a second language, History or Politics and Biology, Chemistry or Physics have to be studied. I think this is not needed, as different students of course have different strengths, not only in life, but also in their academics. I have attended a German "Gymnasium" until Year 10, where we were not able to make any choices whatsoever. Studying 16 to 18 subjects was not an exception. I have also attended an Australian school, only studying 5 subjects. The choice was widely open and no Mathematics or languages or any subjects were required to be able to do your exams at the end and gain university entrance. However, for certain university courses, students also had to take certain school courses. One such example would be Medicine, where students had to have Biology and Chemistry, as well as taking the UMAT test, to see if they are suitable for such a course and also later on such a job. I think this is a successful approach for students, which not only gives them the motivation they need in school, but also the requirements to successful results at the end of their school time. On the side, we also have university students who have to be taken under consideration. Of course they are a different matter altogether. I hold the opinion that the less subjects they take and the deeper they go into details in their study, the better it is. At the beginning of a three to four year study period for their first degree in that area, university students should get a bit of a broader overview of the area for one to two semesters. In that period of time, they get the time needed to see what specifically they want to do and with what exactly they want to continue. The rest of the remaining study period, university students should be prepared for exactly the field they are interested in and want to get a working place later on. This is necessary to make sure that every one of the students is really good at what they are doing and can prepare well for their choice of job. This would give the university students not only more choices from which they can choose their courses, but it would also prepare them better for what they will do later in their life. It would also be a positive criteria for employers when they take people, because then they can be sure that they know what the person is doing and that the person

always aware

Why?

AWK.

repetitive

→ AWK

would like a career in

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Planning Future Ahead

College time is probably one of the most important times in a student's life. I believe this is so not only because we are students and we get our education at colleges but also it is a place where we actually shape our future by making our decisions now. Therefore while we are studying at college, we should think ahead and focus on what we expect from 'our' future.

In the country I live in, many students takes the national university entrance exam and after they receive their scores couple of months after they took the exam. Then comes the decision process, in which you are supposed to determine your college and department. As we might all guess, a student may not perfectly choose the department he wants to be educated in since he is quite young and inexperienced. The trend is that if you have higher scores, you are just placed to a college and a department you have selected.

Let's imagine a case in which the student is not satisfied with the department and field he has been placed. Since it is not always possible for students to be transferred to other departments, he will probably have to keep on with the field that he is supposed to study. However, if he keeps his area of study broad, he can have the chance to study about different topics he has been interested in and maybe he can continue his studies further away in time.

The question of whether having a broad knowledge of many academic subjects has also something to do with the year you spent in college. For instance, if you are an undergraduate student, it might also be a good idea to study wide range of topics coming from different disciplines. This would help you get a better understanding of yourself so that in turn, you can further define what you really want to do in future, whether to study in a different field, whether to join the work life or to go on further studying the subject in the prospective cycles of your education life.

Having a broad knowledge about many academic subjects may also come in handy when you are hired for a job that requires you to collate your vast amount of knowledge coming from different areas. Based on my experience, I can say that most multinational companies do have this tendency of hiring people who have broad knowledge about many academic subjects. These companies believe that they can use the manpower *in terms of intellect* in various areas depending on the time and their need. Hence as time goes by, these people in turn can have greater experience on various work-related subjects than their colleagues who have less broad knowledge about these academic topics and become more qualified and desired employees.

Nevertheless, studying wider range of topics and having a broader knowledge of many academic subjects might not be a good idea if you are a graduate student. This is because the aim of