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# The Northern Echo

The North's campaigning newspaper

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## COMMENT

# Making the options clear

STUDENTS across the region will be nervously opening envelopes and emails this morning as they find out their A-level results.

Hopefully most will get the grades they need to secure their places at university, or to take the next step in their careers, whatever path they choose.

A study published today claims that the choice is not automatically university. According to the report from the Sutton Trust, the proportion of secondary school pupils who believe that getting a degree is important in life is falling steadily.

And poorer pupils are significantly less likely to say they are planning to go to university than their richer classmates.

The cost of university education and fears over long-term student loan repayments are said to be a major factor in the decision.

University is not the be all and end all when it comes to continuing in education, so it is crucial that young people are aware of all their options, whether that is apprenticeships or more vocational training.

If teenagers do not feel university is for them, alternatives need to be publicised and properly explained. Good progress has been made, with schools regularly engaging with employers in their local areas, and initiatives like The Northern Echo backed Foundation for Jobs making a difference. But more can still be done to make sure every teenager has clear choices available.

We wish everyone the best of luck today with their results.



**What do you think?**  
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