

## **Level one or below**

I've had a difficult time trying to find reasonable work and things like a house and a car. After applying for about 800 jobs over a ten year period I began to think I had a Ferranti following me like in Umberto Eco's novel 'The Island of the Day Before' That someone or something has made my life unnecessarily difficult. A little voice in my head said 'level one or below' which I strongly felt meant me and my education level and the possible flippant way people in authority can treat other people for various reasons. I would argue my case with the voice that I am in fact level 7 qualified and hope that it will remove what I think are the barriers to my success. Nothing happens. There is no improvement, but later at some point level one or below will enter my consciousness again and I will plead my case in my mind again but slightly angrily as someone who has been thwarted or somehow abused.

Some facts about being level one or below... you're likely to be associated with the precariat class which is the underclass, you're more likely to be unemployed or employed in a routine occupation and you're likely to rent your home. According to the department for business innovation and skills in 2011 about 57% of the adult population in the UK have level 2 in literacy and 22% have level 2 in numeracy. According to the OECD about 24% of adults score at or below level 1 in numeracy and 16% score at or below level 1 in literacy (It's a different level 1) Some 49% of adults in the UK score at or below level 1 in problem solving in technology rich environments. According to the BBC 40% of army recruits have a reading age of 11 years old or lower and 38% can only do maths aimed at primary school children.

So what about level 7 qualifications? Well, my PGCE (PCET) is on the same level as first degrees in medicine, dentistry or veterinary science, only 7% of the public were qualified to this level in anything in 2009, I graduated at that level in 2001 and again in 2003. I strongly maintain that it should mean something.

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