

Rising number of postgraduates 'could become barrier to social mobility'

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[Research for the trust](#) by the London School of Economics and Surrey University shows that while in 1996 just 4% of working Britons aged 26 to 60 had a postgraduate qualification, this was now 11%, or 2.1 million people.

The study found those with a higher degree earned around £5,500 a year more on average, equating to a career-long "postgraduate premium" of around £200,000.

While this was considerably more than the cost of taking a postgraduate course, the risk was students from poorer backgrounds would balk at taking on yet more loans having paid up to £9,000 a year already for their undergraduate courses. Further degrees can easily cost £20,000 a year in tuition and living expenses, the trust said.

The research into wider changes in qualifications is equally striking: in 1981 58% of the post-26 workforce had no qualifications at all, while 5% had a degree, figures which had changed by 2011 to 5% 31% respectively.

A spokesman for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, said: "This is a useful contribution to the debate and confirms that those with postgraduate qualifications often earn more than others.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/feb/07/rising-number-postgraduates-social-mobility>