

'Google-it' mentality leaves
school leavers unprepared
for university, and destroys
kids minds survey finds

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Camilla Turner, EDUCATION EDITOR

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"Google-it" mentality is leaving sixth-formers unprepared for higher education, a survey of university admissions officers has found.



Around half (49 per cent) of admissions officers said they do not believe that students arrive at university "sufficiently prepared" for higher education, according to a study conducted by ACS International Schools.

A series of interviews with officers at 81 different universities revealed that just 37 per cent felt school leavers are prepared for university, and the remainder were not sure or did not respond.

Admissions officers were asked what impacts of students' ability to thrive at university, and what has the biggest impact on their ability to successfully complete the first year of study.

The majority said that student were “unable to remember facts” and had a “a ‘Google-it’ mentality”. Almost 90 per cent said that students were unable to think and learn independently, and a similar proportion said that students are unable to manage their own time or workloads.

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Chris Ramsey, headmaster of Whitgift School and co-chair of the HMC university committee, has previously said that helping students make the transition from school to higher education is key.

“Universities do need to understand that the first term is the toughest and most risky part of a university career, when everything is changing at once and the drop out rate is highest,” he said.

“Available resources do need pumping into teaching, assessment and tutoring at that level.” ACS International Schools, which runs three schools in London and a fourth in Doha, has commissioned a survey of admissions officers’ views each year for the past decade.

Pupils at the group of schools take the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma as an alternative to A-levels.

Fergus Rose, advancement director at ACS International Schools, said: “Universities are ranked by how high they set their admissions criteria, yet at the same time complain that exam pressure is damaging learning.

“A tipping point has been reached and it’s time to demand change, we must do things differently to help children thrive at school, at university and in later life.”