

# First love vs career prospects

October 6, 2022 @ 12:00am



Many people discourage us from pursuing abstract interests because the prospects appear to be unrealistic and unknown. - NSTP file pic

**LETTERS:** The eye-watering price tag on higher education and the competitive job market make choosing the right subject to study even more crucial.

So how do you know what is best for you? Should you follow your heart and study something you are passionate about (first love), no matter where it leads you, or should you pursue a degree with a more secure career path?

Most advice on which degree to pursue focuses on either "study what you love" or "pick a degree that will give you a better chance of getting a job in the future".

Many people discourage us from pursuing abstract interests because the prospects appear to be unrealistic and unknown. But is it really impossible to pursue a degree that you enjoy, if not love, and that may lead to a job in the future, if not a secure position?

Choosing courses based on qualifications or sticking to what one loves despite the risks appear to be the only two appealing options, but I believe focusing on both is more prudent.

Genuine interest (which often begins with doing and trying before becoming passionate) in something cannot be faked, and it is the surest way to succeed. In the long run, simple factors like a person's happiness and sense of fulfilment should not be overlooked because no argument can compensate for your regrets when you see people your age or younger finding a purpose in life and excelling in your dream job.

If you are selecting a degree or a course, my advice is to not confuse your first love with your career prospects. Determine your area of interest and play to your strengths. If you are patient and fortunate enough to have both develop into passions, that is fantastic.

Keep in mind that you are not giving up your first love. You can also devote time to activities that you love, regardless of whether you studied them at university.

That being said, if you really want something, keep trying and don't give up until you get it.

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