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Does on-line distance higher education pay off for adult learners? : the case of the Open University of Catalonia / Martin Carnoy ...

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Abstract

The increasing opportunities created for adults by on-line distance universities raise important issues about the payoff to such education. This study uses a unique set of survey data gathered by the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) in 2009 to estimate the earnings gains of the 2000?2003 cohorts of UOC students in six programmes of study over an average six-year time frame between entering and one year after leaving their studies. It compares their gains with the earnings gains of comparable full-time workers in the Spanish labour force by age, education level, and gender. The results show that those who studied in UOC's two-year second-cycle degree programmes had positive relative earnings gains but those in three-year first-cycle degree programmes did not. The study further discusses why adult learners might nevertheless study toward degrees for which payoffs appear low. .(HRK / Abstract übernommen)