DHAKA, THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 2023, *BHADRA 9, 1430 BS* | A PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

CAMPUS

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THE VIVID WORLD *of* FINE ARTS

WHY YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CONTRACT CHEATING

STORYTELLING AS A SKILL IN CREATIVE CAREER BUILDING

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

ANIME REVIEW

BOCCHI THE ROCK!'S REPRESENTATION OF SOCIAL ANXIETY IS MESMERISING

Produced by CloverWorks and adapted from the manga of the same name, *Bocchi the Rock!* is a phenomenal slice of life and comedy anime that follows a young girl, Hitori Gotoh, with crippling social anxiety. Throughout her life, she's had trouble making friends and fitting in with others, leading her to start avoiding social interactions completely.

Beyond its "cute girls doing cute things" hook, *Bocchi the Rock!* is a thematic journey that overflows with creativity and innovation. By the time the first few episodes finish, you will definitely find yourself cheering for the band as they work behind their dreams and ambitions of making it on the big stage.

TV SERIES REVIEW

RUN ON

Run On consoles viewers who have hit a bump in their careers and shows that it is totally okay to chase a new dream, no matter your age or level of success in the previous field. The core message of the drama is that as scary as it might seem, you can start afresh and run towards a new dream along with people who will love and support you through it all.

OPPORTUNITIES

Internship at RTI International (Research)

ELIGIBILITY

Currently pursuing an undergraduate or graduate level degree in education, social sciences, or a related field.

Eligible to receive academic credit or fulfill an educational requirement.

Excellent written and verbal communication skills in Bangla and English.

Proficient in using Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).

Visit globalcareers-rtiinc.icims.com/jobs to apply

DEADLINE: NOT MENTIONED

Asia Foundation Development program 2024

ELIGIBILITY

Have a demonstrable record of experience and accomplishment related to The Asia Foundation's fields of expertise: governance and law, economic development, women's empowerment and gender equality, environment and climate action, and regional cooperation.

Be under 40 years of age by January 1, 2024.

Be conversant in English (TOEFL exam results are not required).

Visit asiafoundation.org to apply

DEADLINE: AUGUST 28, 2023

AAUW International Fellowships for Women

ELIGIBILITY

Have citizenship in a country other than the U.S. or possession of a nonimmigrant visa if residing in the U.S.

Hold an academic degree (earned in the U.S. or abroad) equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree completed by the application deadline.

Be proficient in English.

Visit aauw.org to apply

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

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LETTER

Dear Campus,
As someone who left high school with many friends and memories, walking into university felt overwhelming. You know those movies that depict university life as fun, exciting, and full of parties and adventure? Well, my first few semesters felt rather like a fish-out-of-water story. I guess it's easier to become friends with people at a younger age than when you're an adult. And with the absolute jump in academic pressure that university has compared to high school, there's barely enough time to meet new people! But much like school, you start to become more comfortable as time passes and you start to find more people with common interests and similar vibes. Soon enough you've finally got a group of people you get to call your "university friends". So, I guess this movie might have a happy ending after all.

Mir Masroor Ahmed
First year student of CS
BRAC University

RESPONSE

Dear Masroor,
Friendship is important, especially as adults. As children, friend-making happens almost automatically, simply due to proximity or chance. But when we grow up, we get to pick our friends, and these are the friendships that not only dictate our lives, but also tell us a lot about ourselves.

Best of luck,
Campus

TEACHERS TALK

Why you need to know about CONTRACT CHEATING

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

ASRAR CHOWDHURY

It's 6:00 PM. You have an essay deadline at 11:59 PM in Google Classroom. Your grades aren't bad. However, you've been through personal stress. You couldn't effectively manage time. You have a reputation to maintain in front of your family and peers. You message a good friend who has submitted. Your friend and you 'navigate' the virtual world. You submit the essay just before midnight.

Now pause and think. Do you know somebody like the person above?

ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

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Once a form of academic dishonesty is identified as a trend, it takes time to (a) educate recipients, and (b) find ways to address it.

Citing somebody else's work as your own or extracting the bulk of your submission from one or two sources is plagiarism. Today, plagiarism can be detected. Institutes have developed methods to address plagiarism. There is a new form of academic dishonesty now. It's contract cheating.

Robert Clarke and Thomas Lancaster coined the term "contract cheating" in 2006. Contract cheating is a process through which students (or academics) get original work done for them through a third party. This third party can be a friend. It can also be a site (or a firm) that does original work for a fee.

Contract cheating flourished during the Covid-19 pandemic when education went online. Educators could smell something fishy, but they neither had the techniques to detect it nor the framework to address it.

Sadly, thanks to globalisation, it's possible to anonymously access online resources. Online sites tempt students towards free essays. These sites now use AI and ChatGPT. Search engines show these sites at the top of their searches through sponsorship. Before too long, students find themselves in front of essay mills that offer tailor-made essays, and even dissertations. If you didn't know all this, don't worry. These essay mills hire influencers to influence students from as early as middle school through online platforms.

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Our friend is somebody we've all known at some point. Desperation leads young people to do things they may not understand at the time. This is where educators and institutes need to identify students who need extra support in writing and motivate them. Educators can check drafts of a submission with a one-to-one discussion. However, as class size increases, this method becomes challenging.

Parents also need to be made aware that if their child doesn't make it to a top school or a top university, it's not the end of the world.

Fortunately, contract cheating detection software is being developed. Plagiarism-checking software now uses metadata to extract internal features of a Word file. A document.xml file reveals if a Word file has gone through developing content, editing, adding citations and figures, proofreading and corrections, and the like.

Citing somebody else's work as your own or extracting the bulk of your submission from one or two sources is plagiarism. Today, plagiarism can be detected. Institutes have developed methods to address plagiarism. There is a new form of academic dishonesty now. It's contract cheating.

Through forensic language analysis, it is possible to analyse the uniqueness of a writing style and compare it with past submissions of a candidate. All these are in primary stages now, but they will develop. And with it, detecting contract cheating will become more evident.

***

If contract cheating isn't acknowledged as academic dishonesty or isn't checked, it encourages an unfair system. What incentive will I have to be honest if others can get away with contract cheating? Over time, unfair systems destroy themselves. This is a historical fact.

Asrar Chowdhury is a professor of Economics at Jahangirnagar University. He talks about economic theory in classrooms. Outside he listens to music, follows Test Cricket, and plays the flute. Email: asrarul@juniv.edu

CAREER

FROM THE LAB TO THE MARKET

Opportunities in Biotech entrepreneurship

When thinking about biotechnology, we imagine scientists working inside a lab. While that's a crucial part of biotechnology research, biotechnology's purpose has always been to serve the general public. That can only be done when the research leaves the four walls of a lab and reaches the populace. In Bangladesh, there's an immense need for innovative biotechnology-based products for creating new jobs and introducing innovative solutions to problems specific to our country.

TASNIM ODRIKA

"Bangladesh's current self-sufficiency in the production of livestock and poultry is largely due to the utilisation of biotechnology," says Dr Jahangir Alam, Chief Scientific Officer, Animal Biotechnology Division, National Institute of Biotechnology (NIB).

Bangladesh's tremendous potential for fostering biotechnology-related innovations is further reiterated by Dr Md. Salimullah, Director General (Additional Charge), NIB and Biotechnology Focal Point, Bangladesh.

"Bangladesh is pioneering with the release of Bt brinjal (a type of genetically engineered crop). Also in the pipeline are Bt cotton, golden rice, late-blight resistant potatoes, etc. Exploring sectors with opportunities for quick product development is crucial. Hence, the adoption and implementation of genome-editing technology like CRISPR-Cas is necessary," according to Dr Salimullah.

"It is imperative to focus on designing and developing our own anti-microbial products and vaccines to address the specific disease patterns and infection-causing microbes prevalent in Bangladesh. Emphasising this aspect is of utmost importance to drive genuine progress in the field of biotechnology," asserts Dr Salimullah.

But how does a Life Science graduate get into entrepreneurship? Labiba Mustabina Oishee, Business and Clinical Development Associate, Renata Limited, shares her experience.

"While finishing my third-year of university studying a Biochemistry and Biotechnology degree, I started thinking about how to apply the acquired skills in the real world. Unfortunately, the options were limited and didn't capture my interest," says Labiba.

After venturing outside of life science, as a result, she seemed to find her footing. She realised that she would like to have a role that was not strictly laboratory-based but something more innovative. That is when she found out about biotechnology entrepreneurship and that some of the most reputed universities abroad offer programmes specifically tailored to this role.

"A huge challenge for the development of biotechnology-based products is the lack of lab facilities and equipment. There is also a lack of understanding of legal regulation when setting up a business for Life Science graduates," says Dr Alam.

Dr Salimullah also supports this statement by discussing how entrepreneurs engaged in product development must be well-informed about intellectual property (IP) rights and ensure the protection of their creations.

"Bangladesh's current self-sufficiency in the production of livestock and poultry is largely due to the utilisation of Biotechnology," says Dr Jahangir Alam

The lack of lab facilities that can allow innovators to test their prototypes stands as a huge challenge at the moment. But organisations like NIB, Aspire to Innovate (a2i), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), and Child Health Research Foundation (CHRF) are stepping up.

"The government fully recognises the significance of biotechnology, not just for the country's development but also in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is crucial for entrepreneurs to proactively research relevant areas and develop diverse Biotechnology products," remains the advice of Dr Salimullah.

Tasnim Odrika is a drug development analyst at Renata Limited.

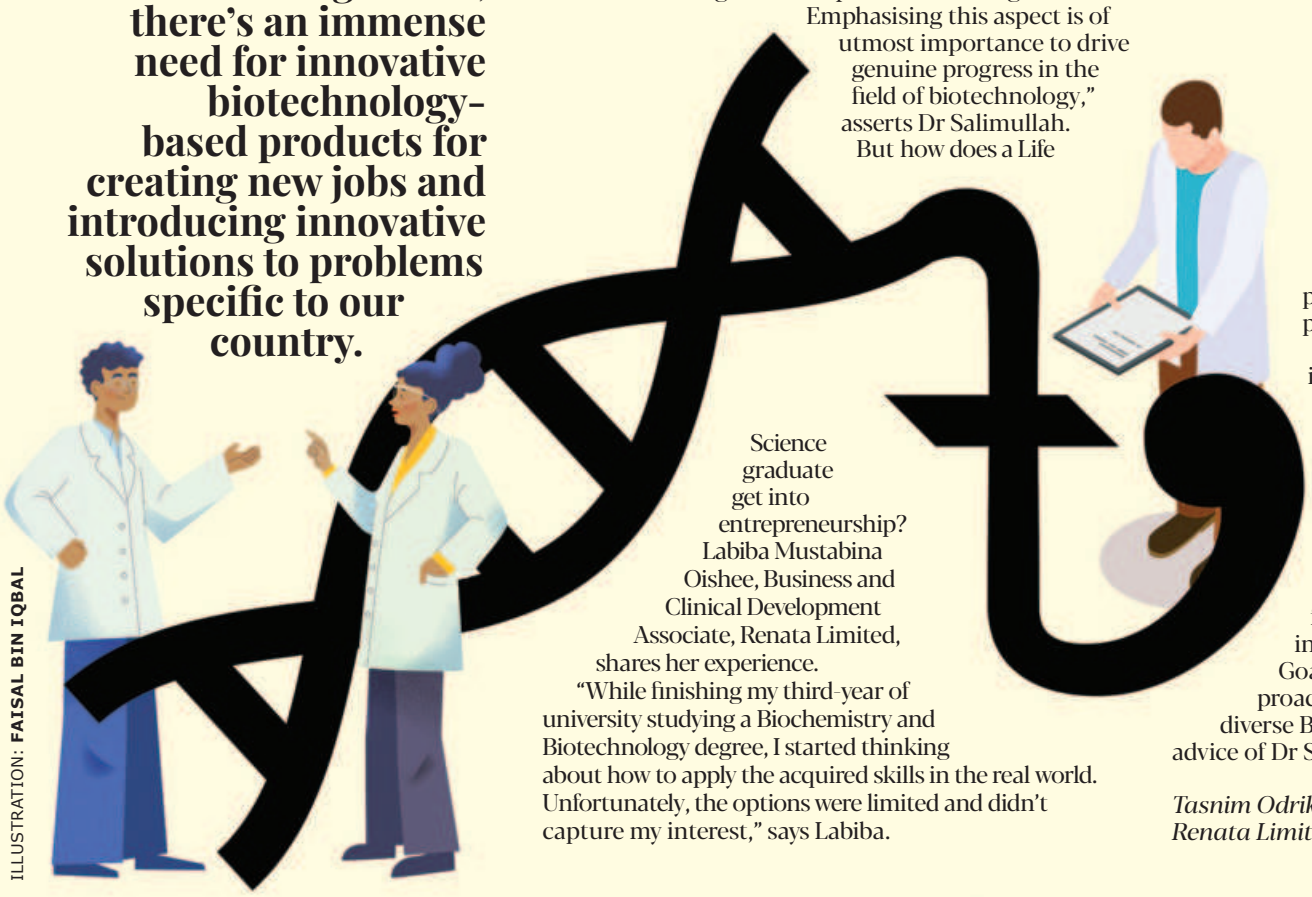

ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQBAL

EDU GUIDE

THE VIVID WORLD of FINE ARTS

PHOTOS: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

AZRA HUMAYRA

Maybe you are passionate about arts, and on a dreary afternoon, your curiosity leads you to the question, "What do they teach in fine arts?" The pull of culture and creativity calls, luring you into a domain where imagination can run wild. Welcome to the refuge of the creative arts.

Drawing and Painting
Students interested in artistic expression, visual narrative, and creative discovery are encouraged to study Drawing and Painting.

Arindom Kundu, a third-year student of the Department of Drawing and Painting at Dhaka University (DU) says, "The curriculum is set through different mediums like pencil, charcoal, watercolour, oil colour, etc. Each medium requires stages of practice and learning, where our professors are always there to guide you through the journey."

Graphic Design
Students with a blend of creativity and strategic thinking are encouraged to study Graphic Design.

Md. Harun-ar-Rashid, Associate Professor at the Department of Graphic Design at DU, says, "Every person possesses diverse talents, including the ability to creatively express themselves through drawing. Graphic Design not only offers students many job opportunities but also stands alone in integrating technology into fine arts education. Our graduates find success in gaming, media, entertainment, and advertising, showcasing their skills."

Printmaking
Students with an interest in detailed procedures, tactile innovation, and the art of reproduction are likely to enjoy Printmaking. Students who have a good eye for detail and are interested in investigating the convergence of traditional and contemporary print techniques should enjoy this medium.

Oriental Art
Oriental Art welcomes students who are fascinated by the diverse cultural heritage of the East. It offers a supportive learning environment for those interested in exploring Asian art, history, and philosophy as well as multi-dimensional techniques of fine arts.

Whether students are historians researching cultural symbolism or artists incorporating these traditions into their modern work, this discipline encourages those who are passionate about preserving the rich artistic history of the Orient.

Ceramics
If you're someone who enjoys creating three-dimensional works of art, Ceramics may be the perfect fit. The study of ceramics is ideal for individuals who are interested in exploring the malleability of clay, experimenting with different techniques, and combining traditional and modern approaches.

Sculpture
Sculpture is designed for individuals with a strong desire to create tactile and three-dimensional art. It is suitable for both aspiring sculptors and art enthusiasts, offering a platform for them to explore diverse materials and techniques while honing their artistic expression. Students who find texture, scale, and materiality fascinating will excel in this environment.

Craft
Craft is an attractive option for those who love transforming raw materials into functional or decorative pieces.

This discipline's principal goal is to provide adequate education to students for them to produce modern and current creative crafts as opposed to conventional crafts. It emphasises the fusion of art and practicality, making it an excellent choice for those who wish to explore the world of skilled manual creation and artistic creativity.

History of Art
If you have a keen interest in exploring the cultural and socioeconomic stories that are interwoven within visual art history, History of Art is the perfect study for you.

The pull of culture and creativity calls, luring you into a domain where imagination can run wild. Welcome to the refuge of the creative arts.

Fariha Oyshi, a freshman studying History of Art at DU, says, "Art history is captivating. Ideal for art and history enthusiasts, it offers career paths like curating, teaching, museum roles, restoration, authentication, and archiving."

Choosing to pursue a career in the fine arts provides students with distinct advantages, encompassing the realms of creativity and the unrestricted expression of individualism. If you are an individual with a creative spirit, fine arts may just be your calling.

Azra Humayra is a student at Dhaka University.

NOTICE BOARD

ISD 2.0: Embracing the future with global collaborations and enhanced learning experiences

SUMAIYA RASHID

On August 12, 2023, International School Dhaka (ISD) unveiled ISD 2.0 – a redesign of their emblem. It now stands for knowledge, inclusivity, and their vision of "Empower, Inspire, Embrace". This rebranding is a part of larger investments to renovate campus buildings as well as rebuild their legacy and embrace the future.

"ISD is looking to the future, to be a school that will give students an even more inspiring future focus and a broader learning experience that no other school in Dhaka can offer," said ISD Director Steve Calland-Scoble.

Starting with some ground-breaking collaborations, ISD 2.0 will give students in grades one through ten the opportunity to collaborate with the famous, research-backed robotics programme at Carnegie Mellon University using Lego and VEX kits.

In addition, the renowned football and cricket academies FC Barcelona (Barca Academy) and CricKingdom by Rohit Sharma, which was launched by Mr Pareg, VP of Global Expansion of CricKingdom Global Pte Ltd, are two of the most exciting additions to ISD. Furthermore, ISD has welcomed a licensed instructor from Australia's national organisation for teaching swimming and water safety (AUSTSWIM) to its pupils. Such additions should be highly anticipated, especially for sports enthusiast students.

"I am thrilled to announce that CricKingdom Cricket Academy is now coming to Bangladesh. This will be the fifth country where we successfully operate our academy," affirmed cricketer Rohit Sharma in a video presentation.

Manas Singh, CEO at STS Group, said, "Since ISD is the top school in the entire country, we naturally anticipate such features here. We are bringing the greatest programmes from around the world to our students so that academics and sports can progress to the next level. It takes a substantial investment to bring such collaborations to Bangladesh, and it is critical to sustain our rich legacy by incorporating new components to embrace the future. Our initiatives have been greatly appreciated by our parents and students."

Students will undoubtedly benefit from these new initiatives as they are taught to learn independently and holistically. They will have the opportunity to access top-notch facilities through exciting co-curricular programmes available only to ISD students.

Father of a current student and former ISD student, Mashfiqur Rahman, said, "Watching my son follow in my footsteps fills me with a sense of pride, security, and immense happiness. When ISD originally introduced new ideas and concepts in the early 2000s, the educational system was not nearly as advanced as it is today."

EDU hosts "Train the Trainers" Andragogy Practicum workshop

East Delta University (EDU) hosted "Train the Trainers" workshop on "Andragogy Practicum" on August 19.

The workshop was orchestrated by Professor (in Practice) A. Qaiyum Chowdhury from EDU's School of Business Administration. Prof. Chowdhury, an internationally acclaimed mentor, is renowned for orchestrating, conducting, and participating in an array of training programs, workshops, and seminars spanning both national and international realms.

Diverging from the conventional "Pedagogy" method, Prof. Chowdhury championed the innovative "Andragogy" approach, fostering an interactive learning process that fuels deeper comprehension and real-world application. In his words, "This distinctive andragogy methodology not only imparts profound subject knowledge, but also uncovers its intrinsic significance. Learners acquire the acumen to proficiently apply their learning in personal and real-life contexts, nurturing resilience, values, and self-assuredness."

The presence of EDU VC Prof. Muhammad Sekandar Khan added an extra layer of significance to the workshop.

ULAB's CSE department holds seminar on career opportunities in IT industries

The Department of Computer Science & Engineering at University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) organised a seminar titled "Technology-driven Career Opportunities in IT Industries" on August 17. Rajeeb Tarafder, IT Director, Wunderman Thompson Bangladesh, conducted the interactive session.

Tarafder focused on the importance of fundamental knowledge blended with skills and engagement with different industry-oriented co-curricular activities during the course of study. Prof. Muhammad Golam Kibria, Acting Head of Department, faculty members, and students attended the seminar. ULAB Computer Programming Club (UCPC), IEEE ULAB Student Brunch, and IEEE ULAB Computer Society supported the seminar.

Bhuiyan Academy launches University of Hertfordshire LL.B (Hons) Supported Distance Learning program for the first time in Bangladesh

Bhuiyan Academy has unveiled its pioneering LL.B (Hons) Supported Distance Learning program, in collaboration with the prestigious University of Hertfordshire. The launch event celebrated this groundbreaking partnership.

The event witnessed the presence of esteemed dignitaries including Dr Rabia Bhuiyan, Principal, Bhuiyan Academy; Senior Advocate Anisul Huq, MP, Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Justice Obaidul Hassan, Appellate Division, Supreme Court of Bangladesh; Barrister Mohammad Mehedi Hasan Chowdhury, Additional Attorney General of Bangladesh; Dr Barbara Henry, Associate Dean, University of Hertfordshire; and Sayaz Miah, Director of International, University of Hertfordshire.

Advocate Anisul Huq said, "A lot of barristers, including many sitting Justices, are from Bhuiyan Academy, leading in different setups of life. The Bhuiyan Academy took the initiative of introducing the International Education program of the British curriculum and context in Bangladesh. I appreciate their effort and express gratitude. I also want to say thank you to the administration of the University of Hertfordshire. I hope through this distance learning program we take the relations further and cement the bonding."

This collaboration positions Bhuiyan Academy as the exclusive partner of the University of Hertfordshire in Bangladesh. The LL.B (Hons) Supported Distance Learning program offers Bangladeshi students a world-class legal education, combining face-to-face interaction with flexible online learning.

STUDY ABROAD

The right way to choose your university

ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM

Choosing foreign universities to apply to can prove to be a tedious task. But it certainly doesn't have to be that way if you set specific guidelines about what it is that you value and seek in your university experience. As another enrollment season is coming around, here are a few pointers to get you started.

Don't rely on university rankings alone
When looking into which universities to apply to, there is a tendency to focus too much on rankings. We romanticise top-ranked universities to such a high degree that we fail to consider their shortcomings. Many of the aspects that the rankings system uses, e.g. citations and international outlook, might not be priorities to students. Moreover, the rankings are only reflective of a university in its entirety,

The number of people in your classes and the student to teacher ratio should also be taken into account.

not of the particular discipline that one might want to study. Since they do not take student satisfaction into account, it's also usually not indicative of the quality of life that one might have when attending university.

A better way to pick a university is by speaking to its current and past students on student forums and chats or going through students' blogs, vlogs, and reviews. Additionally, instead of looking into general rankings, it is a better idea to look into universities that are considered good for your particular major.

Consider the school size and class sizes
Different students thrive in different environments. While some might love the hustle and bustle of a large public university where each class houses hundreds of students at once, others prefer a more intimate setting for their education.

A smaller school size means you are more likely to see familiar faces as you go about your everyday life on campus while a large school can result in you never seeing the same stranger twice. The number of people in your classes and the student-to-teacher ratio should also be taken into account. It is only wise to weigh the pros and cons of both, and see if the schools you like can strike the sweet spot between the extremes.

Think about the ideal location, accommodations, and food options
When thinking of studying abroad, we immediately jump to the conclusion that we must go to the US, Australia, or Canada. We often fail to look into the hundreds of other universities that are located elsewhere that might be a good fit for us. More students are opting to go to Southeast Asian or European schools nowadays because of the wider range of opportunities there. Think about what kind of an institution you want to go to, and not what country you think you should be going to.

While a good acceptance rate and academics might seem like a good reason to apply to a university, you might want to look closely at other things too. Your life doesn't begin and end inside the classroom. In fact, you'll probably spend most of your time outside of an academic setting. Think about what is more important to you – a city setting with vast, modern facilities or a quiet rural setting.

The condition of the student accommodations is also an important factor to consider. How many people do you see yourself living with? What amenities are offered in on-campus housing? Answer these questions before you decide on a university.

Career support is important
A university education is your stepping stone into the professional world. Career counselling services, co-op opportunities, or advisory services for further education are things that can prove to be crucial for your career.

Look closely at the curriculum
Some universities have a very strict curriculum, while others have a more open curriculum which focuses more on interdisciplinary teaching. If you're absolutely certain about your major and would prefer not to dabble in unrelated things, you can opt for the former. But if you are interested in exploring various subjects and aren't entirely sure about which area you want to study, an open curriculum might be a better option for you.

Adrita Zaima is an A level student.

ILLUSTRATION: **FAISAL BIN IQBAL**

EDU GUIDE

ILLUSTRATION: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

Are We Prioritising the Humanities Enough?

RUDAIBA MAHBUB

The studies of the humanities can be traced back to centuries. The spread of knowledge mainly started with an exploration of the world around us. An exploration of human nature, culture, society was critical in order to make sense of it all. Even so, our attention has shifted elsewhere.

In Bangladesh, all English medium schools have a set standard for the languages they offer (English and Bangla), but the teaching differs from school to school. However, subjects like history and geography are merely glossed over in grades three and seven. In the national curriculum, besides the languages, humanities are crammed under "Social Science", taught usually between grades six and ten.

While Bangladesh does have institutions and university departments dedicated to humanities subjects, the lack in the foundational level in these areas makes learning at such institutions very challenging.

Ereti Rhidil Rahman, a student at University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh (ULAB), says, "I am pursuing my major in English and Humanities, and minor in Media Studies and Journalism. Both streams require a good grasp on world history, but most students, including myself, have little to no prior knowledge regarding it."

In the face of the challenges, Sudeep Chakravarti, a journalist, author, professor, and the founder of the Center of South Asian Studies at ULAB, remains positive, "I do see many students in the university system who lack foundation in humanities and, perhaps more importantly, lack confidence to take initiatives, practise critical thinking, and hesitate to move beyond rote learning and the rigid direction of syllabi and instructors. All it takes to change this is space, opportunity, enabling, empowerment – and a gentle nudge."

To end on why humanities should be seen with higher regard, Sudeep Chakravarti, says, "I believe that whatever you learn or choose to specialise in, a 360-degree outlook is crucial to shape you fully as an individual. A businessperson will be hobbled without an active sense of history and politics, in a range from local to global. Liberal arts education seeks to provide this 360-degree engagement with humanities."

Rudaiba Mahbub is currently an undergrad student at ULAB.

HOW TO USE CHATGPT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE AS A WRITER

ChatGPT can help you come up with ideas for your articles or stories. Simply give the AI a prompt mentioning what kind of ideas you need, who your audience is, where the writing will get published, and so on. The more detailed the prompt, the better the ideas.

Ask ChatGPT to help you prepare an outline for your article. Ensure that the prompt you provide is very specific. You can also ask ChatGPT to mention sub-categories under parent categories. This will help you generate a more defined structure that will help you chalk out the flow of the article.

When referring to any sort of data in your article, you can ask ChatGPT to help you search for relevant data along with sources. For instance, you can prompt the AI to "find data, with sources, related to dengue deaths" and it'll provide you with what you asked for accordingly. However, cross-check the data and sources. ChatGPT still has trouble pulling numerical data accurately. It also won't be able to provide any recent data.

Whatever you do, never copy-paste anything directly from ChatGPT into your article. Chances are high that the article will get flagged for plagiarism in one way or another if you do this.

CAREER

STORYTELLING

as a skill in creative career building

AAQIB HASIB

When creating a resume and writing a cover letter, what are some of the skills you think about highlighting? Many of you may say work ethic and dedication. Others might say an ability to handle pressure or that they "care too much."

A majority of you would not have thought to put down storytelling as a skill, even though you might possess it.

That is because most of us don't think of it as a skill or trait required for the average white-collar job, as we are told by society that jobs are all largely formulaic and rarely creative.

However, for those of us whose hearts and minds are ruled by the storytellers inside of us, there are definitely opportunities in the traditional job market for leveraging storytelling skills.

Filmmaking

In recent years, opportunities for young filmmakers have definitely increased. There is a demand for content everywhere. After all, what else can most people working a 9-5 job do on the weekdays except watch something?

The OTT market in Bangladesh is also currently booming, with producers and production companies being somewhat more willing to spend money for quality projects.

Saim Bin Mujib, an actor, theatre artist, and multimedia and commercial video producer, shared, "Storytelling is a vital skill for filmmakers, producers, actors and even commercial video creators. Our content, irrespective of what it is trying to achieve, has to engage audiences. The best way to engage viewers is to tell them a story about whatever the topic of your multimedia content is. Additionally, when you're starting out, focus on the quality of your content rather than the production quality. Once you have built an audience, that is when you should ramp up the production value."

Commercial video-making

On the opposite end of the spectrum, commercial video-making is quite different. Here, you're usually selling some kind of product to the audience. Irrespective of whether it is a tangible or intangible product, the important thing is to keep audiences hooked.

The type of content in this particular field can greatly vary – from simple advertorials to high-level videos.

Think about one of the greatest storytelling brands of all time, Nike. If you grew up in the 2000s, I am sure there are countless Nike campaign videos that you remember. Whether it is the infamous "The Switch" or "Winner Stays", these are the type of commercial videos that you could be making in this field.

Saim Bin Mujib advised, "For a film, it is important to keep your plot twists hidden away from the audience. So that they can discover it through your storytelling. For social media and commercial videos, you need to tell audiences right off the bat what is being offered. Maybe through an intro where you show what they can expect from your content."

Advertising and Copywriting

While *Mad Men* might be somewhat exaggerated when it comes to portraying an advertisement agency, there is one aspect to the craft that it gets right. Don Draper consistently mentions how telling a story about a product through their copy is essential for success.

Rubayet Hossain Khan, Managing Director and CEO of O' Content, said, "Storytelling isn't an essential skill, but it can be very useful. There are plenty of people in marketing who won't ever need to use this skill. However, the most important thing is to connect with the audience, which good storytelling skills can help with. A big problem in our country is that everyone believes they can tell a story. But when was the last time you truly remember an iconic ad? So, there is a lack of good storytellers."

Magazine writing

While magazine writing may be very similar to freelance content writing, the latter is more focused on elements like SEO and keywords. Writing for a magazine, however, is vastly different.

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

Here, the focus is on engaging readers, rather than writing content that will show up as top results on Google. When you're writing for a magazine or a features supplement, it is crucial for you to frame your articles in a way that the readers can feel like they're on a journey from the first word till the final one.

As someone who has personally been in this field for many years now, my best advice for newcomers is to be patient. It won't happen overnight. And honestly, if you're looking to become a better storyteller than you already are, then this is the perfect space within which you can begin to hone your skills.

Regardless of where you take your storytelling skills, the creative ability that storytellers have makes them better individuals in other unrelated fields as well. Being able to approach problems creatively can sometimes help in even the most traditional 9-5 job. So, for any of you young storytellers reading this, all I can say is *carpe diem*.