

# Tertiary Study



The Next Step in Your Child's Future

# No Two Students Are the Same. Education Shouldn't Be Either.

And that's why you need to make sure that the institution you're contemplating is focused around your child and their unique personal and educational needs, so that they can grow and thrive in their own way – and find their place.

It's important to get involved and support your child with this decision. Not only is it a huge financial investment, but it's also your child's preparation for the workplace. Choosing the right institution makes all the difference when it comes to their future.

Listed here are objective typical questions and answers to serve as a guideline – information to help you make the best tertiary education decision with your child.

## 1. Which is better – studying in South Africa or abroad?

This is a personal preference. Studying abroad is more expensive, and extensive research needs to be done on entrance criteria, accreditation of qualifications and student visas. Studying in South Africa means your child will be close to home and in a familiar "context" which is generally conducive to success.

## 2. What are some of the main differences between public and private tertiary education institutions?

Public and private tertiary education institutions vary in terms of ownership.

### Public Institutions:

- Established and subsidised by government
- Seen as more traditional
- Have more students per classroom



### Private Institutions:

- Owned by private organisations or individuals
- Seen as more progressive
- Funded through student fees (no government subsidies)
- Fewer students per classroom



Public and private tertiary education institutions' qualifications must be accredited, by law, by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The accreditation process is identical for all tertiary education institutions – public and private.





### **3. Is accreditation important, and does international affiliation impact the graduate?**

The importance of registration, accreditation and licensing of institutions, qualifications and conferring bodies cannot be overemphasised. Unscrupulous institutions unfortunately present illegal credentials and provide poor quality programmes which render graduates unemployable (visit [www.saqa.org.za](http://www.saqa.org.za) to check accreditation). Depending on the field of study, international affiliation may improve graduate employability.

### **4. What steps can Grade 11/12 students take to help decide what to study?**

They should explore options that match their abilities, interests and passions. They can also investigate work experience opportunities. Meeting with the institution's Student Advisor for professional guidance and detailed information, is very helpful. Remember: make sure that the qualification's curriculum is relevant not only to the current, but future expectations of the economy and society.

### **5. What is the difference between Full-Time and Part-Time studies?**

Time and money. Full-Time is faster but involves an immediate financial investment. Part-Time takes longer but can be done at one's personal financial pace.

### **6. Why is it important for an institution to offer a pathway to further studies?**

Studying further through the same institution, either Full or Part-Time, builds on qualifications, creating further employment opportunities.

### **7. Do all institutions have admission requirements and why?**



All institutions have admission requirements to ensure that students are equipped to handle the demands of the qualification they wish to obtain. The requirements vary depending on the institution and qualification. A National Senior Certificate (NSC) with a bachelor degree pass or equivalent is a minimum requirement for degree studies. Additional admission requirements may apply to certain qualifications. Mature age exemption may also apply, depending on the institution and the qualification.

### **8. What do an institution's fees include, and are payment methods and options available?**

Generally, fees are for tuition only. Additional costs like travel, books and materials should be budgeted for. Payment methods and options vary by institution, for example, discounted early settlement and monthly instalments.

## 9. Do institutions offer scholarships, awards and bursaries and how do you apply?

This depends on the institution. There are various categories of awards, bursaries and scholarships, provided the requirements are met. Application procedures vary by institution.

## 10. What is the average class size from first year to final year, and how does this impact on learning?

Class sizes vary by institution. Generally, private institutions have much smaller classes than public institutions. Class size has a huge impact on the level of interactive and participative learning. Smaller numbers enable students to participate in their studies, engage with subject material, build understanding and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, all of which promote academic excellence and prepares them for their future.

## 11. How important is an institution's approach to teaching and learning, and lecturer interaction with students?

An institution's approach to teaching is very important. Academic life should be as relevant, participative and collaborative as possible. Lecturer-student collaboration teaches students how to think and ask the right questions. A progressive and blended approach focused on critical thinking and problem solving, will equip students with the skills they need to thrive in their career.

## 12. Why is it important to have a practical/experiential component in curricula?

Applying theory to real-life makes content easier to understand. Through experiential learning, marketable skills are forged, which students can include on their CVs.

## 13. What role does an on-campus career centre play?

Campus career centres use business relationships for possible part-time work experience and graduate placements. The centres guide students on important processes and work-related skills development. This, added to an academic qualification, gives students a marketable industry edge.

## 14. What is the institution's campus life like and does it promote a balanced student life?

Although academia is the primary focus, campus life should promote a balance through sport, social and cultural activities. Learning beyond the lecture room gives students "broader experience", helping them develop essential life skills.



## 15. Why are on-campus student support services important?

A qualified professional on-campus student support team can identify and confidentially address personal or academic challenges. This promotes healthy and holistic student development.

## 16. Is on-campus accommodation important?

This depends on where the institution is situated – sometimes students prefer private accommodation, even when on-campus accommodation is available.

## 17. What basic steps can a prospective student take to prepare for the tertiary environment?

- Visit the institution on its Open Days or make an appointment with a Student Advisor.
- Apply well in advance and register on time.
- Explore the local community.
- Learn to budget, manage time efficiently, be independent and proactive. Ask for help and access support services.
- Have a graduation plan in place.



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