



**Think Education • Think Intelligent**

Every week, education expert Sanjeev Verma will answer your queries on studying abroad. E-mail queries to [features@gulf-times.com](mailto:features@gulf-times.com)

*What factors should I consider while choosing a university or college?*

**— L Townsend**

A good number of college bound students are always confused when it comes to selecting the university/college they would like to study. Given studying abroad, and a selection of thousands of universities on the table, that decision is complicated a bit further. But what are the things one should look at and avoid while making that critical decision? Here are a few pointers.

For starters, just because a family member or a friend or someone you know is attending a university or a college doesn't mean it is right for you. Everyone has their own priorities, preferences and interpretation.

To go to a university that suits you is not about following other people, it is more of finding what appeals to you. Second, look at a school's reputation. How popular is it? What are the common things that people and alumni say about it and how do you find that appeals to you? Do they reflect the values and desires you wish to experience or not?

These questions weigh the views of others in your context.

Probably the third most important element to consider would be to do your research and see which ones you actually prefer. Focusing on the size of the school, types of facilities and student groups, volume of international students and faculty to student ratio are very essential. Studying in a university is also much about the environment and social life as it is about the university itself. The location of the city, the community, and availability of the things you frequent and its history are also extremely important.

That is the reason why actual campus and city visits are recommended. Overall, university/college selection is a mixture of personal, academic, social and economic matches among the preferences and priorities of applicants. It is, hence, important to have a thorough research and understanding into these issues.

*(Sanjeev Verma began with Ernst & Young and progressed to set up the Gulf operations of IDP Education Pty. He now leads Intelligent Partners, developing a wide range of solutions in areas of international education.)*