

Making decisions: campus or city?

The sheer number of considerations can make choosing the right university a tough decision. Has your son or daughter thought about what type of environment might suit them?



What's a campus university?

A campus university is one that's built across one site with student accommodation, teaching and research facilities as well as sport and leisure activities in close proximity to each other. Although typically situated within one location, some universities may be spread across a number of campus sites within a particular region or area.

The pros: Campus universities are popular for their strong community feel and ease of access between buildings. They can feel safe and secure with public access limited.

The cons: Due to the size of the campus, many tend to be located outside of larger towns or cities. This can potentially leave campus universities feeling isolated from wider public hotspots, with travel links becoming limited and less accessible than if situated within a city.

What's a city university?

A city university is based within a major town/city with student accommodation, teaching and research facilities as well as sport and leisure activities spread across a central urban area. Therefore, the university can be located across various parts of its home town/city either in the form of colleges or as separate academic and student buildings.

The pros: City universities are very much at the heart of their local area, with direct access to wider public services and leisure activities. Transport facilities are often strong, allowing students to enjoy the full benefits of the city which is available on their doorstep.

The cons: There's not much opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle. Due to their open design, travel between university buildings and facilities is not always secure with public access available on main routes.

So which one's right?

The decision is very much down to personal preference. Both campus and city universities can offer very different experiences depending upon which environment best meets the needs of the individual student.

You can help your son or daughter by asking them if:

They'd prefer to be based upon one site, with all their facilities in close proximity to each other?

Or if they'd thrive in a city location offering variety and ease of access?

What about peace and quiet versus hustle and bustle?

Location is very important as whatever they choose will become home for the next three or four years. When choosing between universities where the course offering is similar, the decision on location becomes a heightened priority. Your son or daughter must feel comfortable and be able to envisage themselves living in that area. You can help by using open days and, later, applicant visit days as an opportunity to check out the area around the university to assist them in building a picture.

BEST OF BOTH

Royal Holloway is located in Surrey's beautiful countryside, but close to bigger towns plus just 40 minutes from London.