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Headline: 6 questions parents and students should ask when choosing a university

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Global exposure gives SMU graduates the edge to be adaptable and employable anywhere in the world.. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Be part of a new generation of future-ready graduates at Singapore Management University

Picking a university is a big decision that could affect the course of your life. For most students, it's a stepping stone to the right career path and a window of opportunities. So naturally, for both students and their parents, there are many factors to take into consideration when making the choice.

Here are six key factors to consider:

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1. IS THE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM THE RIGHT FIT?



SMU's core curriculum is delivered through three learning paths: capabilities, communities and civilisations. Together, they provide a holistic approach to foster strategic thinkers, lifelong learners, team players and global citizens. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

As you will be spending the next few years of your life in school, it is important that the university's curriculum is the right fit for you. Find out which curriculum style suits you best and challenges you academically. Most importantly, you should be able to pursue your passion while enriching your academic experience.

Local university Singapore Management University (SMU), for instance, is known for its hallmark interactive pedagogy. It encourages active learning through faculty-student interaction and project-based learning aimed at developing critical thinkers who can effectively express ideas and tackle problems.

Unlike other institutions, SMU's interdisciplinary and flexible curriculum allows you to curate your learning experience by choosing from over 300 double degrees and second major options. You get to graduate with a guaranteed second major from any of SMU's six distinguished schools. This is especially great if you have varied interest in different areas of specialisation or simply wish to widen your career path. All SMU undergraduate programmes are direct meritorious honours programmes, which could give its graduates an edge over others in the job market.

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2. HOW WOULD THE DEGREE HELP FUTURE-PROOF YOUR CAREER?



SMU was also the first university in Singapore to be accredited as a research organisation by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. headquartered in Washington, D.C. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

With industries and businesses being transformed by a new wave of emerging technologies, McKinsey Global Institute projects the creation of 555 to 890 million new jobs by 2030. Chances are, a lot of the jobs that will be available upon your graduation are not even created yet.

This is why universities like SMU are constantly innovating and offering new undergraduate programmes that keep up with the latest industry and economic trends. This ensures that graduates are not only equipped with the most relevant and updated skills and knowledge, but also increases their employability and the versatility to survive in an ever-changing world.

Additionally, an accredited institution like SMU will ensure that your degree is recognised by prospective employers as well as other institutions should you pursue higher education.

According to Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings 2020, SMU is ranked 11th amongst specialist universities in the world. That is one way to put your degree on the global map.

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3. IS THE SCHOOL CONVENIENTLY LOCATED?



A second home for students right in the heart of the city at SMU's Prinsep Street Residences. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Commuting to campus can be a hassle and a hectic rush especially if you live on the other end of the city or require multiple transfers just to get to school. And it gets exhausting to make the journey home after a long day in school too. For these reasons, most universities offer an option to live on campus.

SMU's Prinsep Street Residences (PSR) is conveniently located eight minutes by foot from the campus ground. There are 23 shared apartments to accommodate 255 students. Each 12-bedded apartment is equipped with a suite of amenities that include personal wardrobes, private study desks and air-conditioning. Open spaces and common recreational activities are also available to encourage students to learn and grow in a community. The 24-hour security ensures that students can live, learn, work and play in the comfort of their second home in the heart of the city. You no longer have to worry about rush hour crowd or being late for class.

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4. HOW WILL THE UNIVERSITY HELP YOU GAIN GLOBAL EXPOSURE AND EXPAND YOUR NETWORK?



SMU has over 200 partner universities across all the continents of the world for exchange programmes, giving students 100 per cent opportunity to participate in a global exposure programme. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

In the era of Industry 4.0, graduates are expected to adopt an international perspective. Many universities now offer global exchange programmes as part of their curriculum, but such programmes are usually offered as an elective or as part of a scholarship.

However at SMU, it is a mandatory for all students to go on a global exchange programme. SMU offers various overseas programmes in over 50 different countries that include international exchange programmes, overseas internships, study mission modules that include overseas trips, participating in international competitions or co-curricular activities and overseas community involvement programmes. SMU has enhanced financial support for students to ensure that no one miss out on the opportunity chance to go on these programmes.

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SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law and School of Social Sciences. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

In addition to the global programmes, SMU also has more than 150 student clubs and countless events for you to take part in. The aim is for students to connect with people and communities across all walks of life, to find your life purpose and more importantly, enjoy a colourful campus life.

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5. HOW WILL YOUR DEGREE INCREASE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY?



Graduates from SMU registered a healthy and stable employment rate amongst all local universities.
PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Choosing a university is only the first hurdle. Upon graduation, you will have to face the question of which career path to choose – and more worryingly, if you will be employed and how soon?

SMU graduates are highly sought after by top employers locally and internationally. In the 2019 Joint Graduate Employment Survey (GES) conducted by SMU and other autonomous universities, SMU graduates came out top in terms of commanding a higher starting salary – a mean gross monthly of \$4,121 – and have the strongest employment rates with 92.3 per cent of graduates securing full-time employment within six months of graduation.

SMU manages to boost the employability of its graduates through its various programmes that thoroughly prepare students for the working world. From hosting industry talks, collaborations with prestigious industry partners, having a dedicated career coaching centre on campus, and a specially designed work-study programme, students gain valuable working experience while studying on campus. They also receive mentorship from industry partners throughout their course of study and internship.

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6. WOULD WE BE ABLE TO AFFORD THE FEES?



There are several financial assistance schemes available at SMU to assist undergraduate students in funding their education. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Ideally your education should not be a huge financial burden for you and your parents. So it is important to make your financial calculations and consider your options carefully. Alternatively, you can also apply for the various scholarships and financial assistance schemes that are offered by the university.

SMU Access , for instance, is a scheme by SMU that offers a financial aid package that is equivalent to the full tuition fees. After taking into account all scholarships, bursaries and other grants from all donors and the Singapore government, the final grant amount is subject to a maximum of four years of undergraduate studies. The scheme is bond-free for all eligible undergraduate students. Every year, one in three incoming freshmen is awarded a scholarship or financial award by SMU.

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY'S UNDERGRADUATES ADMISSION 2020

Be the next generation of empowered and employable graduates at Singapore Management University. Apply now at admissions.smu.edu.sg.

Next intake: August 17, 2020

Application closing date: March 19, 2020. 11.59pm