

## What is the best university in Zimbabwe?

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The prospect of possibly moving away from home to a new and exotic location whilst finally living on your own terms sounds exciting to the average high school learner. Given there are now thousands of universities worldwide and also a competitive number in Zimbabwe, it is then seemingly a challenge to pick a suitable one. With the right amount of research and some basic direction, though, you should be able to identify the destination that is right for you. Below are some of the factors for consideration when choosing a university.

### Subject/ major

Before making the final decision concerning which university you should go to, the first consideration should be the subject area one would like to major in. Universities have departments in them known as faculties. A faculty is a division within a university comprising one subject area or a number of related subject areas. In some sections of the world, they can be referred to as colleges and schools. The most common faculties across universities are; the faculty of commerce which encompasses most business management studies, the faculty of law which at times is encompassed under the faculty of the arts and the humanities. Other faculties commonly found across the board include faculty of engineering and that of the health sciences. Not every university has all the faculties and relevant majors of interest on offer, for example in Zimbabwe we only have three medical schools –The University of Zimbabwe, National University of Science and Technology and Midlands State University. This means that one should research and shortlist the universities that offer their programmes of choice.

### University ranking

There are many dedicated publications that churn out university rankings, -overall and by faculty. Some of the more well-known ranking systems include the times higher education and the qs world rankings. In most countries, there generally seems to be some sort of correlation between the university attended and employability. Higher ranked universities tend to produce better employment outcomes for graduates on condition that the student has achieved the minimum acceptable grades set by the market. Most Zimbabwean companies ask for a 2.1 or better degree class whilst South African companies generally consider graduates with a minimum average of 65%. It is noteworthy that an individual faculty can have better subject ranking than the overall ranking of the entire university so the ranking of the programme of interest compared to other programmes offered elsewhere should be the base factor in this category.

### Costs

It's no secret that higher education can cost an arm and a leg. The National Student debt figure in

America is currently standing at around \$1.5 trillion with no sign of slowing down. The prospective student needs to pay attention to the overall price of the study programmes available and this means the tuition fees, especially. There are notably some [programmes with low or no tuition fees](#), as well as some institutions that, for a substantial amount of money, will ensure you the best and most reputable degree you can find. As cost can sometimes be a deal-breaker, it should be high on your list of variables to consider. Accommodation and food costs in some locations can add up to be higher than tuition fees so those are some things that one has to thoroughly research before committing. A good example is Switzerland where annual tuition averages to 1600 Euros but living costs can easily exceed 20 500 Euros. Avenues of going around the affordability problem include applying for scholarships and student loans.

## Other Factors

Facilities in universities are fairly the same, with a library, sports centre, health service, career service, and others. However, there are some aspects that differ such as location, and extracurricular activities. Some universities have traditionally always done better in certain sports and have even gone on to produce athletes for national teams so if you are a sports person that should be of interest.

To answer your question on what is the best university in Zimbabwe, the best university for you as the individual comes down to the one that ticks the most boxes for you. Does it have the programme of choice? Does it have a sizeable number of alumni from that particular programme working in the industry? Are you in a position to meet the academic requirements for entry? All these factors and others should guide you into choosing the university that is right for you.

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