



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

Which is the best country to study in and how do I decide?

— Henry Smith

With an overwhelming number of institutions and consulates promoting education overseas, it is becoming a dilemma for most students to make choices with regards to studying in unknown countries — even though knowledge bases such as journals, Web portals and blogs have extensive information, and college and university fairs are taking place almost every month in Doha. More information is being generated than we can realistically absorb in order for us to arrive at that all important decision of what to study and where?

Looking at the most popular countries that aspiring international students consider, in terms of student volumes, are the US, the UK, Canada and Australia. This ranking is solely derived from enrollment numbers. In such a situation, where you are faced with vast amounts of information that in majority of cases generally tend to overlap or contradict, it becomes essential to objectively consider the various options that one has in hand.

Making that objective assessment is dependent on the numerous variables one might have in mind. Usually, a sizeable majority of students take into account: admission and application requirements, tuition and living costs, programme duration, the institution's reputation/ranking and location-specific preferences as well as job options after completing the course. These determining factors in most circumstances give an objective figure and would help channels your choices further. There are no specific terms that would say this is ideal for this variable or that, as in most cases it would be dependent on the particular field of study you are thinking of.

Hence, the best way to narrow down your options would be to set your ideal standards based on the aforementioned variables and only then start researching.

An education counsellor would be useful to you in the search as they would be backed by substantial experience and a readily available wealth of knowledge.

(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.)