



# HELP, MY CHILD HAS TO CHOOSE A DEGREE!

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THEIR WAY TO (INTERNATIONAL) HIGHER EDUCATION

- › Facts & figures
- › Lots of practical tips & insights
- › Information about studying in the Netherlands
- › 5 questions to jumpstart the conversation

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

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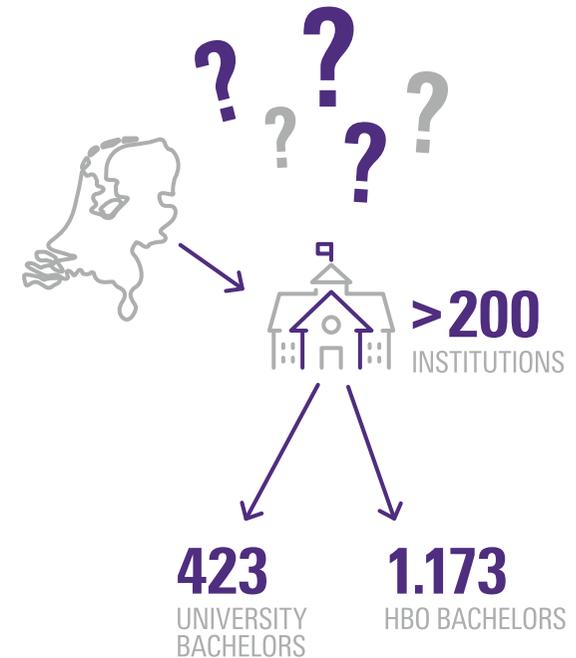
# HELP! SO MANY OPTIONS!

**17,022 full-time Bachelor's degrees.** That is the total approximate number of courses available in Europe for your son or daughter to choose from if they want to study abroad. The fact that this huge number of courses is spread out over **hundreds of educational institutions** (U-Multirank) does not make deciding any easier. An increasing number of young people suffer from choice anxiety: stress about making the wrong choice.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD CHOOSE?

Choosing what to study is new and exciting. It can also be an uncertain process. Not only for the student who is having to decide, but also for you as a parent or guardian. Especially if your child is considering studying abroad. Did you know that as a parent, you are an important influencer in this decision-making process?

In this e-paper, we want to support you by sharing some insights and tips that can help you talk to your son or daughter about this important subject. We describe the whole decision-making process and offer questions that can help at each stage. And we offer five fun, insightful questions that will help you talk about it together. So that your child makes the best possible choice for the future.



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**IT IS TRICKY TO KNOW WHETHER THE COURSE YOU HAVE CHOSEN REALLY IS THE BEST FOR YOU. I SAW A LOT OF CLASSMATES STRESSING ABOUT THIS...**

*Eline van der Sluis, Advanced Technology student at University of Twente*

# 80% CERTAINTY IS ENOUGH

**Every choice is stressful.** Choosing option A means letting go of a number of other interesting alternatives. The anxiety that comes from feeling you may have missed something important, also known as FOMO (fear of missing out), is something that Dutch secondary school teacher Marcel Bijman often sees in students. He says most students prefer to be 100% certain about the choices they make. 'Because they are so worried that they will make the wrong choice about what to study, they also find it difficult to make a final decision,' he comments. 'Some of them are afraid that a poor choice will cost a lot of money. Others feel they have to get it right the first time; it has to be perfect.'

According to Bijman, it seems as though young people cannot, or do not dare to, make mistakes. 'I think it is important that, as a parent, you encourage your child to make choices, but also to accept mistakes and learn from them. And it might go against your nature, but as a student, remember that you don't have to be 100% sure you made the perfect choice. In some situations, 80% certainty is good enough.'

”

**IT MIGHT GO AGAINST YOUR NATURE, BUT YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE 100% SURE THAT YOU MADE THE PERFECT CHOICE. IN SOME SITUATIONS, 80% CERTAINTY IS ALSO GREAT.**

*Marcel Bijman*



## HELP YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER CHOOSE THOUGHTFULLY

- Figure out together in which phase of the decision-making process they are.
- Take a look at the discussion tips, starting on [page 10](#).
- Discover the importance of being in touch with student ambassadors.

# IS YOUR CHILD SUFFERING FROM DECISION-MAKING ANXIETY?

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:



## OFFER PERSPECTIVE

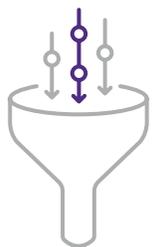
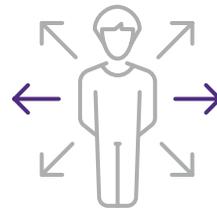
'THE PERFECT PROGRAMME DOES NOT EXIST'

Every course has its pros and cons. It is important that it is a reasonable fit, but it doesn't need to be a perfect match. And don't forget that you can also learn from a 'mistake'.

## CONFRONT

'YOU'LL HAVE TO DECIDE SOONER OR LATER'

After secondary school, the choice about further education has to be made at some point. Face the possibilities head on, and go through the process together, step by step.



## CONSOLIDATE

'GO THROUGH THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS STEP BY STEP'

Don't make the big decision in one go. Through a process of several sub-choices, your son or daughter will more likely come to a grounded decision.

*Take a look at [5 questions](#) that will help you talk about choosing a programme.*



# WHO IS IN CHARGE?

What is your role, as parent or guardian, in your child's decision-making process?

How do you avoid being overly involved, or under-involved? Young people need to talk about choices and the decision-making process. But with who, how, and how much?

The answers to these questions differ per person, but also per family. As Eline mentioned, it is especially important that, as parents, you remember that your child is the one who has to make the decision. So, try to make a clear distinction between your own ambitions and ideas, and your child's interests and wishes.

## DECIDING FOR YOURSELF LEADS TO MORE SUCCESS AND LESS STRESS

According to Marcel Bijman, parents can put a lot of pressure on their child – whether they intend to or not. 'I sometimes see parents asking more questions than the students are asking during an information session. Or parents who have a very strong opinion about what their child should study. My experience is that if the student makes a motivated, independent choice, they will be more successful in their studies and less stressed. Putting on pressure is always counterproductive.'

Bijman recommends that parents play a supporting and facilitating role. Even if you are the ones covering all the costs for your son or daughter, trust is essential. 'For example, you can ask: What can we do for you? What do you need to be able to make this decision? Let your child take control and give them your trust and support.'

AKASH FROM INDIA ON...

## CHOOSING YOUR OWN PATH

'Being born into a family consisting of solely doctors, I was always an odd apple. Although I enjoyed the medical sciences, I have always had a strong love of numbers and mathematics. In India, people either do an engineering course or become a doctor, but I wanted something more, something out of the box. So I said to myself: Why not merge the two? That's when I found my way into the beautiful world of biomedical engineering and all its endless possibilities.'

*Akash follows the Biomedical Engineering programme at UT*





# STUDYING IS EXPENSIVE

There are many reasons why parents have become more and more involved in what their children decide to study. And one of those is the financial aspect. Although fees vary considerably per country – from a few hundred euros to more than ten thousand euros per year – studying abroad is almost always expensive. The high financial pressure also increases the pressure to choose the right course at the outset, thereby keeping the cost as low as possible.

Try to figure out together what the financial picture looks like for your decision-making student. Prepare them, for example, by making a financial plan together, or mapping out how much it costs to study and live abroad.

TIP!



## ARE YOU LOOKING FOR CLARITY ON THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF STUDYING IN THE NETHERLANDS?

- We cover all of the financial issues involved in being a student in our [whitepaper for parents on studying & money](#).
- And did you know that many Dutch students use bikes as their mode of transport? It's not just fun and planet-friendly, it can also save a lot of money!

# OTHER FACTORS

As a parent, you may feel that the opinions of peers are almost too important to your son or daughter. Or that they pay too much attention to secondary matters. As a secondary school teacher in the Netherlands, Marcel Bijman understands these concerns. 'Students can quickly be influenced by first impressions. If the advisor offering information and guidance (online) does not seem very nice, a student may immediately decide that the course is no good.' These fleeting impressions can significantly hamper the making of an 'informed decision'. As a parent, you can encourage and challenge your son or daughter to look beyond first impressions, and to dare to ask themselves critical questions. At the same time, always show that you have confidence in their decision-making abilities.

## WHY THE NETHERLANDS?

If your child is enthusiastic about studying in the Netherlands, you may have good reason to be pleased. According to [Educations](#), the Netherlands ranks fourth among the top European countries in which to study. Does this not convince you? Or do you just want to know more about why it is a good idea to live and study beyond the borders of your own country? Another online resource, Study in Holland, gives [5 reasons for studying in the Netherlands](#), and offers insights into the experiences of international students, such as [Deniz from Turkey](#).

## 🔗 THE IDEA OF YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER STUDYING ABROAD MIGHT TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO. BUT WHY NOT LOOSEN UP AND TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

This could indeed mean considering other countries, or visiting a [Virtual Education Fair](#).

VLADISLAV FROM BULGARIA ON...

## STUDYING IN THE NETHERLANDS

'What more could I want than a country where everyone speaks English, the education is good and affordable, the nature is beautiful, and I also get to live with so many other Bulgarian people? Well, if I have to be honest, there is one drawback: the weather could be better. But you get used to it. You have every possibility to ride a bike here, and I love it. Can you imagine a highway for bicycles? I couldn't, and perhaps you can't either. But it's possible here, there are even bicycle roads to the cities next to us.'

*Vladislav studies Technical Computer Science at UT.*



# CHOOSING IS A COMPLEX PROCESS

Most young people take the necessary time to carefully choose their next steps after secondary school. And rightly so: figuring out what to study is not only a decision-making process, it is also a development process. As a parent, remember that your son or daughter is still searching for his or her own identity, and exploring what works and what doesn't work for him or her. The fact that your child is finding their way is the very thing that makes this decision so complex – all the more so, if you add an international study to the equation. Periods of indecision and procrastination are all part of this search. In all of this, it's good to know that a decision-making process, typically, consists of various fixed phases. Together, you and your child can benefit greatly from recognising these phases and seeing exactly where your son or daughter is in the process, and which steps still lie ahead.

## PHASE 1. SETTING VALUES AND GOALS

'I want to help people communicate and interact. I want to study in English, and I believe that technology can have a big impact.'

## PHASE 2. GETTING A BROAD VIEW OF WHAT THE OPTIONS ARE

'I see that in the various countries I am thinking about there are 10 courses that match my goal.'

## PHASE 3. SELECTING AND EXPLORING A NUMBER OF OPTIONS

'I am going to Skype students from two different courses. And I've already figured out that the culture in either the Netherlands or Sweden will suit me best.'

## PHASE 4. MAKING A DECISION

'I am choosing the Communication Science programme at UT in the Netherlands.'



HENI FROM INDONESIA ON...

## THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

'I have always had a desire to study abroad. I felt that studying abroad would be a highly rewarding experience that would benefit my career and personal development. Europe was my first choice, and I narrowed it down to a few countries, including the Netherlands. The Netherlands was my top choice, because it is known for its globally recognised technical degrees, and has many options for English-taught programmes. I chose UT, because it is ranked highly and is known around the world for its technical studies. Besides that, UT ranks third of all universities in the Netherlands in the National Student Survey (NSE).'

*Heni is a Bachelor's student Mechanical Engineering at UT*



# 5 QUESTIONS TO JUMPSTART THE CONVERSATION

# HOW DO YOU APPROACH THE TOPIC?

As your children grow up, having discussions and debates with them can be fun, but challenging, too. If your child finds it easier to talk about their choice of study with someone outside the immediate family, like an uncle, aunt or mentor, encourage that, by all means. And if you are finding it challenging yourself to have this conversation, then being honest about that and finding peace and space together can make it easier for everyone.

Before we go into the 5 important discussion questions, Marcel Bijman shares a few tips.

## 6 TIPS

1. Enter the conversation out of **genuine interest**. Your son or daughter will know right away if you have a hidden agenda. So, make room for their opinions, feelings and wishes (even if they are not in line with yours).
2. Take your child seriously and **treat them as an equal**. Emphasise that it is a process you want to go through with them. Realise (and express this) that you are coming alongside your child, not vice versa. Dare to ask: who or what can help you?
3. Ask as many **in-depth and open-ended questions** as you can (questions that can't be answered by yes or no). Ask follow-up questions, too: 'What do you mean by this? What makes you think that? Do you have an example of this? How else could you look at this?'
4. Focus more on **listening** than on giving your opinion.
5. Consider going **somewhere else** to have a conversation – for example, that cosy coffee shop you both enjoy. A relaxed environment is a good place to have heavier conversations.
6. Be aware of the fact that young people have their own **information channels**. Encourage your son or daughter to use these channels creatively when considering options for the future.





01

**WHAT DO  
YOU ENJOY  
DOING?**

## START SMALL: WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING?

The things your son or daughter is interested in and enjoys doing are an excellent starting point for a conversation about choosing what to study. Together, discuss what motivates your child, what he or she gets excited about. These questions might not lead you directly toward a specific job or degree programme, but they will give you helpful pointers.

### SOME QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK:

- What are the things that really fascinate you?
- Which school subject interests you most (or bores you the least)?
- What activities would you like to try out in order to discover what you enjoy?
- Do you have a dream? Or did you have a dream when you were younger? Tell me about it...
- What did you enjoy doing when you were little? For example, what do you remember liking most at primary school?
- How do you feel about going off on your own to a different country to study?

Your child may find it difficult to answer these types of questions, but as a parent, you may have memories and observations that are very valuable. Discuss them together. That way, your child may well discover unexpected areas they are interested in, like ICT, people, nature, health, technology or economy.



### TIP!

#### TAKE YOUR TIME AND DO NOT RUSH THROUGH THESE QUESTIONS

For example, look through photo albums together, or make a list of all the hobbies, class presentations and projects that your child has worked on over the years. What stands out? Are there any recurring themes or interests? Ask why exactly your child enjoyed a certain holiday or experience so much.

If you embrace this process as a great opportunity to get to know each other better – and not just as a way to tick off another decision on your list – it can become a very enriching process with surprising conversations, sometimes late into the night...



02

# WHAT ARE YOU GOOD AT?

# WHAT ARE YOU GOOD AT?

As you talk about what your son or daughter enjoys and finds inspiring, it is also important to consider what they are good at, and to map out some of their stronger and weaker personality traits. Some teenagers have a clear sense of identity and personality, while for others it can be pretty challenging to understand themselves while still developing. Who are you? What are you good at? In what type of situations do you shine and feel most confident? Questions like these will help these young people grow more self-aware and confident.

As a parent, you can help your child get to know themselves (better) by pointing out specific things they are good at. Also, share examples of situations in which you have seen those talents at work. Don't just use school subjects or skills as examples, but think of soft skills and character traits. 'You are always very patient.' 'You interact easily with different types of people.' 'You strongly dislike inefficiency.' 'You are more serious and thoughtful than entrepreneurial and leading.' 'You like to take calculated risks.' 'You like adventure.' 'You thrive in new surroundings, such as a different country.'

## GO OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

As a parent, try to let go of your own mindset and to keep an open mind when you discuss this second question. Leave the beaten track by exploring a technical field with your daughter, for example.

”  
**YOU ARE MORE SERIOUS  
AND THOUGHTFUL THAN  
ENTREPRENEURIAL AND LEADING.**

”  
**YOU ARE ALWAYS  
VERY PATIENT.**

”  
**YOU WANT TO GET FROM  
A TO B AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE**

”  
**YOU INTERACT EASILY WITH  
DIFFERENT TYPES OF PEOPLE.**



## TIP!

Is your daughter solution-orientated, curious and interested in developing products or technologies? Then take a few minutes together to read about [Heni's experience](#), a Mechanical Engineering student from Indonesia. Or discover what [Renée](#) learned about Electrical Engineering.



03

# WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR DEGREE?

# WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR DEGREE?

For your child, the whole process of deciding on what to study is new, exciting and sometimes uncertain, with both long and short-term consequences. You want them to have a good time studying as well as setting them up for a bright future. Young people do not always naturally think far ahead. You can help your son or daughter with this by talking about 'later'.

A tip from Marcel Bijman: encourage your child to start browsing for jobs, careers, companies and sectors that interest them during secondary school. There are different ways he or she can do this, for instance: spend the day shadowing a family member who is a doctor, or ask an acquaintance who works at a tech company for a tour. By experiencing the work field itself, your child may be able to see and feel more clearly whether it suits them.

## QUESTIONS FOR A CONVERSATION ABOUT 'LATER'

- What do you want to do with this degree?
- Where do you see yourself in ten years' time?
- What do you really hope to be doing in the future? What kind of environment, job and tasks do you see yourself involved in?
- What things do you think are important in life, aside from work?
- If you're interested in studying abroad, are you also thinking of pursuing a career abroad?

After a Bachelor's degree, many students decide to do a Master's. This gives them the opportunity to combine fields of study, specialise, or gain new experiences studying in different cities or countries.

## JOBS IN 5 YEARS' TIME

A certain measure of job security is great, of course. But in today's rapidly changing world, personal interest and motivation can be as important as financial concerns in considering career steps. As a parent, consider the fact that jobs nowadays are less and less for life,

## AKASH FROM INDIA ON... THE FUTURE

'My specialisation track within Biomedical Engineering is Biorobotics. I have always been interested in the area of Biomechanics and Cardiovascular Interventions and Technologies. This track gives me the freedom to discover the latest technologies. I have already learned a lot, and my choices have opened up new avenues of knowledge and learning, which is what I am here for. I believe that technology is the next step in human evolution, and UT provides an optimum environment for me to explore this conviction every day in multiple ways.'

and that having flexible and marketable skills, qualities and knowledge is actually becoming more important.

In our [whitepaper on future jobs and career opportunities](#), we describe important trends that are changing the work landscape, we paint a picture of six futuristic professions.



04

**DO YOU WANT TO GO ON  
TO HIGHER PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATION OR UNIVERSITY?**



## TIPS!

- Encourage your child to explore both HBO and university options in the Netherlands, so that they discover the differences for themselves.
- Check whether your secondary school diploma qualifies you for Dutch higher education at [Study in Holland.nl](https://www.studyinholland.nl).
- Find out more about [admission requirements for international students at UT](#).

# DO YOU WANT TO GO ON TO HIGHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OR UNIVERSITY?

In most European countries, young people have plenty of options when it comes to studying. In the Netherlands, there are two higher education options: higher vocational education ('HBO' in Dutch) and university. These two separate directions do not exist in many other countries, so let's take a quick look at the main differences.

In general, an HBO course is more practical and vocational, while a university course is more theoretical and scientific. HBO students usually have lessons in smaller classes, carry out more practical projects, and are trained for a specific profession. University involves more theory, requires more self-study, and is focused on independently designing and developing research and solutions. At a university, students learn to carry out scientific research. Classes are often in large lecture halls or work groups. Of course, there are also higher vocational training institutes that give lectures and universities that offer project-based education – like UT, for example.

But for the most part, HBO is more practical and university is more theoretical and more academically demanding.

MarcelBijman advises as follows. 'I recommend that students, together with their parents, think carefully about which type of education suits them best. The answer depends entirely on how you learn and work, not necessarily on your secondary school level.'

### POINTS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD:

- How do you learn best, through independent study or through traditional educational methods? Do you like digging into the theory, or do you prefer to get stuck into hands-on projects?
- Do you enjoy discovering and researching new knowledge? Or do you prefer practically applying the knowledge you already have?
- Does your country offer a learning style similar to HBO? Does it sound interesting to you, or would you rather do a university programme? How can you find out more about the difference?

## UNIVERSITY

- THEORETICAL AND SCIENTIFIC (SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH)
- LESS PERSONAL EDUCATION (LARGE LECTURE HALLS & WORK GROUPS)
- INDEPENDENTLY DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING RESEARCH AND SOLUTIONS (MORE SELFSTUDY)

## HBO

- PRACTICAL AND VOCATIONAL (TRAINED FOR A SPECIFIC PROFESSION)
- PROJECTBASED EDUCATION (LEARN BY DOING)
- SMALLER CLASSES MORE CONTACT HOURS



# 'TOM' MAKES LEARNING MORE FUN AND EFFECTIVE

At UT, we have researched how students learn best and what they enjoy most. That led to us to develop our own educational method: the Twente Education Model (TOM in Dutch).

In this model, each module in your Bachelor's programme is problem-based. As a student, you dig into a current societal or business problem with a small team of fellow students – often from different UT programmes. Of course, you also follow lectures, workshops and feedback sessions. In this way, you learn to look beyond the boundaries of your own field, to make connections with other disciplines, to apply the acquired scientific theory directly in practice, and also, to work well with others. We call it multidisciplinary, future-proof education. Challenging and fun!

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**WORKING IN A TEAM ON A CURRENT TOPIC IS EXCELLENT PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE.**

HENI FROM INDONESIA ON...

## THE TWENTE EDUCATION MODEL

'UT programmes are known for their practical application. In every module, we work on a real-life practical problem with a project team. So, while I have gained knowledge of scientific theory, this programme has also helped me grow personally and professionally. Every project helped me build my confidence in working in a team and in problem-solving.'

*Heni is a Bachelor's student Mechanical Engineering at UT*



05

# WHERE DO YOU WANT TO STUDY?

# WHERE DO YOU WANT TO STUDY?

Let's say your son or daughter has decided that university-level education is the right fit, and already has a field of study in mind. Where does he or she want to go? Does your child want to study close to home, or would he or she enjoy the adventure and challenge of studying abroad?

Many courses are available in different countries and at various universities. How do you choose the most suitable one?

## STUDYING NATIONALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY?

Whether studying internationally is a positive experience or a step too far depends, to a large extent, on your child's character. Discuss honestly whether your child can handle being far away from home for a length of time. Being in a totally different environment, where the weather, the culture, the food, the people and the language are completely new can be a great adventure. But it also comes with challenges.

To get an idea of the different options, teacher Marcel Bijman recommends that students visit as many education fairs programmes, and universities as possible. Of course, it isn't always easy to visit universities abroad. But you can take part in virtual or online open days, ask the universities in question what other orientation options they offer, such as education fairs in your country, and learn more about the city and country online. 'It's worth it, even if only to discover that you don't like it,' says Bijman. 'Just walk around, virtually or physically, see if you feel comfortable there, get a feel for what is taught there, and how. Going to look around for yourself is one of the most important steps in the decision-making process.'

## THE MOOD AND ENVIRONMENT DEFINITELY MATTER

Every country has a unique culture, and every university has its own emphases and teaching methods. For example, in the Netherlands,

UT is a frontrunner in English-taught education, and as a result, our campus offers a very international study environment.

For many young people, the country and city in which they go to study are important, but not necessarily decisive. Geographical locations are a factor, but so are the atmosphere and the number of friends or acquaintances going to the same city or university. The general mood you encounter in university buildings and on campus matters, too.

It's important to talk about these emotional aspects. After all, as a parent you want your son or daughter to feel at home where they decide to study. So, ask questions such as: 'Do you feel comfortable there? How do you feel about the culture and environment? Are they your kind of people? Do you see yourself spreading your wings there?'

## DOES DUTCH CULTURE SUIT YOUR CHILD?

Are you familiar yet with typical Dutch foods, such as raw herring or croquettes? Have you heard of any of the Dutch national holidays and how they're celebrated, like King's Day?

- Together, read up on some [Dutch traditions](#).
- Discover more about the student city of [Enschede](#), where UT is located.
- Is your child interested in several countries? Try the [Country Test](#) (MastersPortal).

## QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS TOGETHER:

- What makes this course different from similar courses in other countries?
- What makes this university different from others?
- What does the average week of a student in this programme look like?
- What support do students receive throughout this degree?  
Is that a good fit for your child?
- Will this educational institution help him or her pursue their dream or ambition later in their career?
- In which sectors and careers do most student who complete this programme end up?

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE OPINIONS OF CURRENT STUDENTS, AND DO YOU WANT TO COMPARE SEVERAL PROGRAMMES?

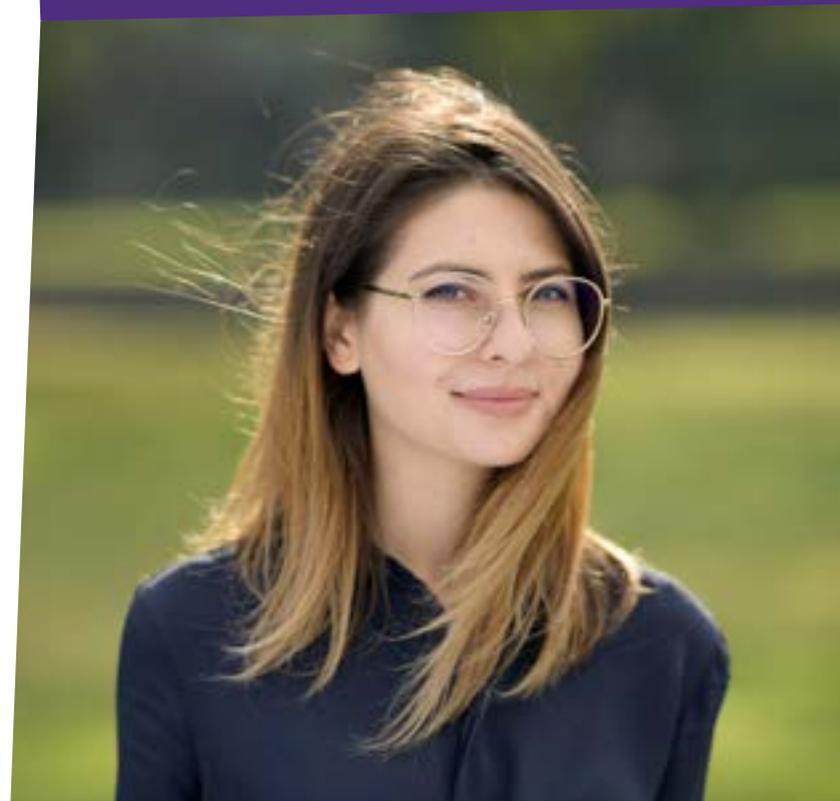
[Study Portals](#) gives an overview of more than 100,000 English-taught programmes around the world. Here you will find admission requirements, costs and student reviews.

[U Multirank](#) compares over 1,700 educational institutions, and also offers you the possibility to compare the courses of your choice.

## IOANA FROM ROMANIA ON... **LIVING ABROAD**

'I genuinely believe that living abroad is about discovering yourself. Yes, a new country is exciting, because there are new places and people to discover. However, what I find the most fascinating is how you get to see yourself from another perspective, and start to question your previous sets of beliefs.'

*Ioana is a Bachelor's student Psychology at UT*



# PERSONAL AND INFORMAL

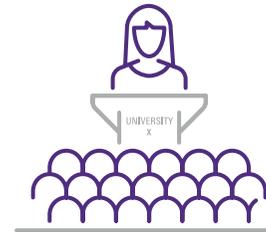
Each university has a different focus. For example, UT is a people-first research university of technology. Your child's academic and personal development are our priority. We explore talents and preferences with them, so that we can bring out the best in each student. At our campus, we offer **54 programmes** in an informal, small-scale and international setting: **35% of our students are internationals** ([Times Higher Education](#)).

Compared to most universities in the Netherlands, UT's staff to student ratio is low. On average, universities have one teaching staff member for every 19.8 students; at UT we have one for every 14.1 students. Teacher Marcel Bijman: 'UT is a very student-orientated university; there, you are not just a number. Contact between students and staff is informal and staff are easily accessible. Students receive a lot of support, and many of the activities take place on the campus itself.'

[🔗 WANT TO EXPERIENCE OUR CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT FOR YOURSELF?](#)

Watch this [campus video!](#)

AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS  
TO ONE TEACHING STAFF IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION



**19.8**  
STUDENTS  
AT MOST UNIVERSITIES



**14.1**  
STUDENTS  
AT UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE



# CHOOSING BY EXPERIENCING

Before your son or daughter makes a final choice, we strongly advise you to gather as much information about possible programmes as possible. If the Netherlands is relatively close to you, your son or daughter can join us for a(n) (online) day, or perhaps plan a city trip and visit the university. If you live further away, Skype or other video calling applications are a great option. These are perfect ways for your child to ask all their questions about the programme he or she is interested in. Encourage your child to speak to students, too: with more comparison material, he or she will make a better choice.

Our 'Student for a day' programme, as we call it, will really help your child to make a good decision ([Policy Monitor](#) - source in Dutch). Most universities and higher education institutions offer opportunities for online open days, Skype calls and online meet-ups. These can be a helpful alternative in times when lockdowns and other restrictions limit your possibilities of travel and physical visits.

## DOES YOUR CHILD ALREADY HAVE A PARTICULAR PROGRAMME IN MIND?

Why not encourage them to sign up for a [Skype chat with a student](#)? Or get in contact with [students from your country](#) on UT's Facebook pages and discuss options and experiences in your native language.

## ELINE FROM THE NETHERLANDS ON... **BEING A (VIRTUAL) STUDENT FOR A DAY**

'I think that being a student for a day is a helpful tool for making a final decision. Most of the secondary school students I know took part in open days. I was a student for a day: in Advanced Technology at UT - the programme I am now doing. The day consisted of a mathematics lecture, a campus tour and some Q&A sessions. The strong point of UT's Student for a Day programme is that you really experience part of a day in that programme's schedule. At some other universities, you take part in a separate programme with a group of other prospective students and don't experience what studying there is really like. Of course, if there is a lockdown, these activities take place online.'

*Eline is a Bachelor's student Advanced Technology at UT*



# MAKING THE DECISION

When all options have been weighed up and your son or daughter has narrowed down the number of possible programmes to two or three, the moment will come when he or she is ready to make a decision. For some, this is when the stress and doubts really begin. Is this truly the best option? Am I missing something? What if I don't like the programme I chose?

It is not at all surprising that such questions come up again towards the end of the decision-making process. In fact, they may even come up long after the decision has been made and your child is already on the go at university. When that happens, remember that it is healthy to discuss doubts and misgivings, and also to put them in perspective, especially if they come up at the end of a careful and thoughtful decision-making process. Marcel Bijman puts it this way: 'If you have taken all the necessary steps to make a sound decision, you have good reason to be confident in the decision you've made.'

We wish you the best of luck and hope you have fun going through this process with your child. If you have any questions, please contact us at the University of Twente's [Student Services Contact Centre](#).

## **LOOKING FOR PRACTICAL INFORMATION ON STUDYING ABROAD?**

Read through all the [information](#) on admission requirements, visas and webisodes on living in the Netherlands.



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**IF YOU HAVE TAKEN ALL THE NECESSARY STEPS TO MAKE A SOUND DECISION, YOU HAVE GOOD REASON TO BE CONFIDENT IN THE DECISION YOU HAVE MADE.**

*Marcel Bijman*

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