

Key differences between studying in the USA and the UK

The UK and the USA are among the top places in the world to study for a degree.

There is little doubt that universities in both countries offer high quality education to students, but their education systems, particularly at higher education level, are significantly different? They differ in several aspects as to the duration, what students will study, how the universities grade the students, and of course the fees. Here are some things to know about how different it is to study in either location.

Duration

You will spend at least one year longer in a university in the US compared to one in the UK, although there are also differences between Scottish and English universities too. Usually it takes four years to study for a degree in Scotland and in the US but three to attain a degree in England. One exception is an architecture degree, which will take five years, anywhere in the UK. This difference in the length of each course may be put down to universities focusing on giving students more breadth of study in their programmes in the US, meaning they will cover units both inside and outside their selected degree. On the other hand, in the UK, education focuses mainly on degree depth.

School Organisation

When applying to US colleges, the application is to join a larger university. In most cases, for the first year, students spend time studying courses from other fields before choosing a major subject. That subject may be housed in a particular school or department, but students still interact with those in other departments.

In the UK, universities have different faculties within the university, and it is these faculties which focus on specific fields. When applying to join a university in the UK, you apply to join a particular faculty. For the duration of studies students will spend most of their time in that faculty attending classes.

Grading and Assessment

If you are studying in the UK, you will be graded under an [honours system](#) at the end of the degree programme. This means that students may graduate with anything from a first-class to a third class degree. In the US, on the other hand, students are graded using the 4.0 [GPA scale](#), getting anywhere from an A to an F.

Assessments are also different during the course. In the UK, a big focus is on lectures and passing exams. This means that a part of the grades are based on exam results, but backed with assessments. In the US, a student's performance is evaluated in multiple ways throughout the semester with presentations, discussions, assignments, and class participation which contributes to the final grade. This means that a service like [essayservice.com](#) would be just as valuable to students either in the US or the UK as grades from assignments contribute to their final results.

The Curriculum

Both UK and American universities focus on depth and breadth, but the UK curriculum is more focused and specialised than the US curriculum. When students enrol at a UK university, they are expected to know what field they wish to study. In the US, the goal is to produce holistic students, so they are expected to study courses both in and out of their specific field. It is easier for students in the US to get double major or minor degrees in unrelated fields than students in the UK.

The Cost

The cost of education in universities in both countries can be high, although for Scottish students studying in Scotland study for free. The cost is generally higher in the US than in the UK when including school and accommodation costs.

University costs in the UK are lower as they are regulated by the UK Government, which [placed a cap](#) on how much universities in England can charge students from the UK and Ireland. In the US, there is no such cap, so universities can charge whatever they want. There are some approximate figures that schools in the US stick to but the government does not control what they charge.

There are many more universities in America than in the UK and accommodation situations vary significantly in each place too. Universities vary greatly, as do teaching techniques, and when choosing a university to study at, it is best to look at the specifics of the course students intend to study, as well as their own financial position.

Collaborative post