

High School vs University

University students are expected to take responsibility for their education.

Students will go from largely relying on others to becoming more self-directed, independent adult learners.

This chart highlights some key differences between the high school and the university experience.

High School		University	
Times/ Schedules	School day is highly structured and organized by teachers.	School day is structured by the student, as they are responsible for scheduling their own classes	
	Time often given in class for students to work on assignments.	Students are expected to study and work on assignments outside of class.	
	Students may find they have more time for extracurricular activities as the competition to get good grades is not as high. They may not have to put in large amounts of study time to get good grades.	Students have less time to devote to extracurricular activities because academic expectations are higher and more study time is required	
Academics	The academic pool is smaller and competition to get good grades is less. Students may be able to earn good grades with minimal effort.	The academic pool is larger and competition to get good grades is higher. Students find that study habits need to be improved in order to maintain the marks they were able to achieve in high school. Minimum effort will likely result in poor grades.	
	Assignments are usually spaced evenly over the semester and introduced by the teacher as the class progresses through the term.	Professors provide an outline (course syllabus) of the entire course on the first day of class, which include all assignment and test dates for the entire term, and the latter part of a course may be weighted more heavily with due dates than in the beginning of the term.	
	Students are not expected to work ahead on course content.	Students are expected to prepare for classes, by doing readings ahead of time.	
	Teachers may make allowances for assignments to be handed in late.	Due dates are not usually flexible. Students know of and are expected to be actively working on assignments throughout the term and not leaving things to the last minute.	
	Frequent feedback with regards to marks.	Students are expected to track their own academic progress and seek help as needed.	
Teacher/ Student Relationship	Teachers are often charged with the task of motivating students to learn.	Students are charged with the task of finding their own motivation to learn.	
	Daily student/teacher contact.	Less regular student/professor contact.	
	Teachers provide regular review, feedback and guidance regarding course content.	Students are expected to take the initiative to ask questions in class or to contact their professors, by email or in person during office hours, if they need help.	
	Teachers may provide frequent reminders about assignment due dates.	Few or no reminders about assignment due dates.	

	High School	University
Parent/Family Involvement	Communication is open and information, such as performance and attendance is freely shared between parents and school representatives.	Students are the only ones who have access to their personal student information. Students must provide written authorization allowing parents or other family members access to their student information.
	Parents contact teachers and counsellors directly with concerns.	University staff, academic advisors and counsellors are bound by privacy legislation and can only answer student progress questions as they would generally apply to any student.
Academic Advising	Parents and Guidance Counsellors recommend academic pathways for students to follow, based on students' interests and academic performance.	University Academic Advisors provide clarification and advice about academic and career requirements. Students must become invested in their own educational goals and career decisions.
	Students often have a limited understanding of the options available to them.	Students start to explore multiple options before committing to a specific academic program or career. Students are expected to act on guidance and advice provided.
Status	Students are often assigned a personal, academic or social status by the people around them – their parents, friends, teachers, or community.	Students can redefine themselves, along with their status, as they wish.
Value Judgements	Students' value judgements are heavily influenced by their parents, friends, teachers or communities points of view, as a result, value judgements are often assumed by the student without question.	Students start to view the world around them through their own eyes. Students begin to question previously held beliefs. The 'status-quo' is challenged and students begin to develop their own opinions, perspectives and values.

Adapted from University of Manitoba (2013-2014). High School vs University. Retrieved from <http://un Manitoba.ca/u1/skills/highschool.html>