

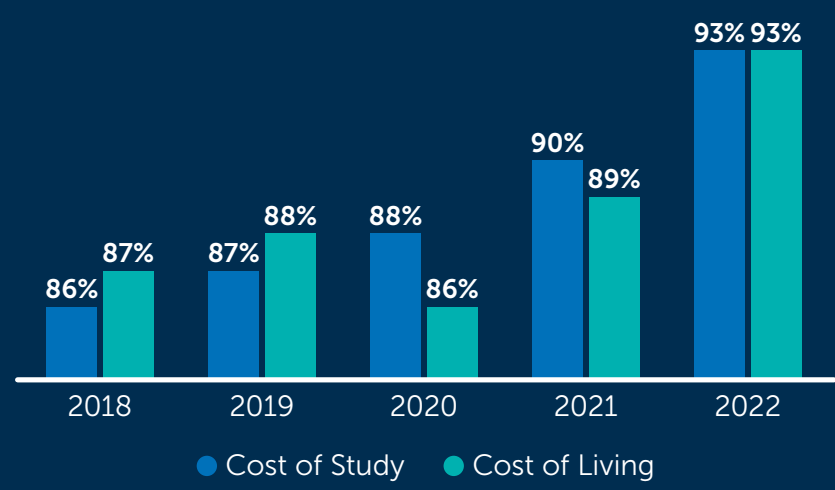
# 8 Ways to Court the Cost-Conscious International Student

Help International Students and Their Parents Understand the Overwhelming Value of an Education from Your Institution

Concerns about the affordability of university have always been with us. But a growing gap between the financial circumstances of university-bound students and the cost of higher education has given those concerns a new urgency.

Improving communication with university-bound students and their parents is crucial. The complexity of the university search process and families’ understandable desire to limit their spend can cause students to choose universities that are a poor fit with their needs and goals. Recruitment marketing, more often understood as a tool for persuasion, is the most powerful means you have of helping families make informed decisions. This infographic explains how communications with students and parents can further both aims.

Percentage of Students Citing Selected Factors as “Very Important” to University Choice<sup>1</sup>



## An Imperative to Educate Families on Value

### Why students question your value...

1	<b>Scared or confused by the cost</b> Difficulty understanding overall costs and debt causes families for whom your university could be an excellent choice to cross you off their list based on misunderstandings regarding your affordability.
2	<b>Missing what’s great about your academic offerings</b> Uninspiring programme-level information on your institution’s website undersells your university’s offerings in key courses, a factor that plays a major role in student choice.
3	<b>Concerned about employability</b> Students’ growing focus on employability leads them to under-appreciate the value of academic programmes that are not obviously tied to specific careers.
4	<b>Undervaluing success support</b> Most students believe they will complete their degree, regardless of their chosen institution, limiting the effectiveness of success-oriented support as selling points.
5	<b>Unable or disinclined to visit</b> Campus visits, among the most powerful tools for converting prospective students, are costly and inconvenient for many families, limiting the number of students participating.
6	<b>Overweighting expense</b> While creating transparency around the total cost of pursuing a degree is essential in converting students, it can alienate prospects if done incorrectly.
7	<b>Feeling unwanted</b> Not all enrolment teams have the capacity and specialised skill set to build deep affinity with students and parents, which is crucial in overcoming price sensitivity.
8	<b>Doubtful about balancing full-time study with work or family commitments</b> Many students work or have other commitments while studying that may make them anxious about whether a full-time degree at your institution is right for them.

### ...and what you can do about it

<b>Educate on cost</b> Provide families with information on university finances starting early in the recruitment process, including explanations of fees vs living costs.
<b>Invest in promoting programmes</b> Partner with your academic staff to ensure that the course pages on your website paint a compelling picture of the interesting and rewarding things their students do.
<b>Emphasise career connections</b> Underscore aspects of your offering that prepare students for today’s unpredictable, fast-changing job market and enable graduates to thrive in many possible careers.
<b>Promote importance of success support for all students</b> Communicate how opportunities for academic advising, study skills workshops, careers support, and mental health support for all students contribute to increased student satisfaction and engagement.
<b>Provide a virtual-visit experience worthy of your institution</b> Ensure that your virtual campus tour comes as close as possible to replicating the feeling of being there—an aim more attainable than ever, thanks to recent advances in web media.
<b>Connect cost and benefit messaging</b> Never show information about costs (or other financial topics likely to make families anxious) without also including compelling illustrations of the benefits of attending your school.
<b>Hardwire high-touch engagement</b> Students see their recruitment experience as a preview of how they will be treated after enrolling. Lavish, personalised attention sends them the message they most want to hear.
<b>Highlight the spectrum of options available for their course of study</b> Promote the flexibility offered to students with work or family commitments, including hybrid, evening, or asynchronous course offerings and how students can access higher education through a degree apprenticeship, online degree, or full-time opportunities.

Focus on the right messages

Convey them in a maximally impactful way

<sup>1</sup>Tribal i-graduate 2023