

Published based on [Ready For Online Distance Education? Read These 10 Rules First](#)

Ready For Online Distance Education? Read These 10 Rules First

Check to ensure the college is accredited by a legitimate accrediting agency. Accreditation means the college and its programs meet certain set educational quality and standards. This also means courses and credits acquired can be easily transferred to another accredited institution, whether online or brick and mortar college. You will stand a better chance of securing employment or promotion at work if you have an accredited degree.

Degree mills and fake colleges - today the internet is flooded with fraud and fake accrediting institutions that give "accreditation" to any willing organization at a fee. Be safe and stay on the look-out for such institutions when you're choosing your online distance education college. There are always "tell-tale" signs of institutions that are not legitimately accredited. If in doubt, check with the United States Department of Education or CHEA to find out if the college you are interested in is accredited.

To ensure that the degree program you are considering is aligned with your long-term educational goals, especially if you think you'll need to advance your degree (for example from bachelors to MBA), it'll benefit you to check if the online distance education institution you'd want to attend for your MBA accepts transfer credits from another online institution.

Class size is as important in online education as it is in a traditional college classroom. Do your research on the average class sizes at the online distance education institution you are considering. Small classes make it easier to interact and voice your opinion.

Find out if the faculty hold any credentials and if they are qualified to teach the program you want to enroll in. If you can dig further to find out what degrees they hold and if they are experienced in teaching online students, this will save you the distress of finding out later that your instructor is a fellow un-qualified student with no education skills.

Find out if it easy to contact your instructor or administration should you have questions or need help. The level of support offered to students varies considerably from college to college. Choose one in line with your needs and expectations.

One of the great things about online distance education programs is that you can begin almost anytime. Thus you shouldn't let anyone rush you into starting your program until you feel ready to put the time and effort it will require for you to succeed.

Be sure you understand whether a certificate or degree can be completed entirely online or whether on site projects, class meetings, or residency periods will be required.

Check if the institution you're interested in offers any form of financial aid assistance. You may be pleasantly surprised to find out that financial aid, loans and the scholarships available to you. In addition, many colleges and universities offer tuition installment plans which help make college more affordable. Ask before you enroll whether such programs exist.

Take your time to research your best degree option and college out there. Don't settle for less than you deserve. Unlike there before when online programs were limited, now there are enormous options and colleges to choose from as most traditional colleges are already offering some programs online.

Mary Jackson is an editor for [online distance education colleges and programs](#) where you can begin your search for accredited programs and degrees. Find more [distance learning resource](#) and tips for success with distance education.

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