

5 reasons why students drop out of university

Issued by [FundiConnect](#)

27 Nov 2023

From financial reasons to choosing the wrong courses, there are many reasons why students drop out of university. Understanding what these reasons are is a good way to prevent students from dropping out, which is why FundiConnect has put together a list of the top 5 reasons why students drop out of university.



[University](#) drop out rates in South Africa are remarkably high, with between [50% and 60% of first-year students dropping out in their first year of varsity](#).

These numbers are something that educators, parents, funders and [tertiary institutions](#) need to pay attention to in order to discover the root cause of why students are dropping out. The best way to decipher these numbers is to first understand why students drop out of university in the first place.

1. Students drop out for financial reasons

Currently, the average cost of sending an individual to university in 2023 is R55,900. This number is expected to [accelerate to R95,700 by 2030](#).

That's why it comes as no surprise that one of the top reasons why students drop out of university is due to the rising cost of tertiary education. Between tuition fees, textbooks, accommodation and study devices, the numbers truly add up and can take a toll on students who are unable to afford these fees.

This along with the other stressors of being a student, such as exams, assignments and everyday living, only fuels the stress students feel when attending tertiary education, leading to drop out.

Students drop out because of work or family commitments

Sometimes, students drop out because they have financial problems and too much to do at work and home. Many students

need to work part-time jobs to afford school, but then their jobs make it hard for them to focus on studying.

If they also have family responsibilities, it becomes even tougher. When students can't figure out how to handle everything, they often end up leaving university.

Students drop out because they are unprepared academically

University is more difficult than high school, and some students have a tough time keeping up. In high school, teachers guide students and make sure they do their work. But in university, professors don't teach students how to learn – they expect students to figure it out on their own.

If a student hasn't learned how to study and be responsible, passing starts to feel impossible. This struggle often leads students to drop out.

Students drop out due to their social life

Many students are presented with a new sense of freedom once they start university. This is mainly due to living on their own and being in charge of their own schedules. Although this newfound independence is exciting to many, it also leads to overindulgence as students stay out late with friends, party, drink and experiment with drugs.

These recreational activities may lead to students missing lectures, exams and eventually failing subjects, causing them to drop out of university.

Students drop out because they chose the wrong courses

Faced with uncertainty about their subject choices and career, a lot of students end up choosing the wrong courses while studying at university. Choosing the wrong course can lead to drop out, as students may find the course difficult or uninteresting, and so, end up leaving university altogether.

It is therefore important that students spend time thinking about the career they would like to pursue and the subjects they are interested in. Students who are unsure about their career prospects can access tools and resources that will help them find their career paths.

[FundiMatch](#) is a careers platform powered by groundbreaking psychometric assessments. This tool makes use of comprehensive [psychometric tests](#) that offer students detailed results regarding their career aptitude, personality and cognitive abilities.

You can find out more about FundiMatch by visiting www.fundimatch.co.za.

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