



If you've been looking at online degree programs, you know there are a lot of options out there, and they all promise convenience, flexibility, and opportunity. So how do you decide? Having clear criteria will help you sift through your search results and choose the program that meets your needs. That's why we've developed a checklist that covers every aspect of what you should consider when making your decision. To give you a head start with your research, we've already provided answers about Averett University's Graduate & Professional Studies degree programs.

## CRITERIA

## AVERETT UNIVERSITY

### 1. Is the school reputable and respected?

Consider a school's reputation and employers' perceptions of its rigor and quality.

- Established in 1859; adult learning programs since 1988 (more than 25 years in adult learning)
- Partnerships with area employers, including Verizon, Canon, UPS, and more

### 2. Is the school accredited? Is the program accredited?

Make sure the program and the institution are accredited by agencies approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Degrees from accredited schools have much more credibility with employers.

- Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone 404-679-4500, at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)

### 3. Does the school have experience with online programs?

Many schools are jumping into online education, but many of those are still trying to figure out how to do it. Make sure any school you're considering has a proven track record of delivering online education.

- Began online learning courses in 1995 via interactive distance learning technology
- Today we use the Moodle online learning system, which is trusted worldwide and very easy to use

### 4. Are courses completely online?

Some "online" programs are actually hybrid programs – they combine traditional classroom instruction with online learning, which means you'll be required to be on campus at various times. Does that work for your schedule?

- All programs are offered 100% online
- MBA and BBA programs are also offered on campus
- Programs are specifically designed for the busy lifestyles of working adults

### 5. How flexible is the program?

Does the program require online participation in real time? Or can you participate in discussions and schedule exams over several days? Will this work for your schedule?

- No real-time participation required
- Weekly assignments and due dates are posted before the course begins
- Log in to the course at any time each week to complete assignments

### 6. Are the classes you need to graduate regularly offered?

Talk to an admissions counselor about class availability. This helps ensure you'll complete the program on time.

- Admissions counselors will map out required classes and timing to guide you
- Programs are accelerated for quick completion

## CRITERIA

## AVERETT UNIVERSITY

### 7. How accessible is the technology?

Look for programs with learning environments and classroom technology that are easy to use.

- Technology is very easy to use!
- 24/7 online learning management system called Moodle
- Averett email (via Gmail) will be assigned
- Online access to Blount Library, tutoring, and official academic information

### 8. What are the credentials of the faculty?

Make sure the instructors have appropriate degrees, real-world experience, and experience teaching online courses.

- Highly credentialed instructors, most with doctorate degrees, combined with experience in their field of expertise
- Ongoing faculty training in teaching adult learners online

### 9. Does the program accept transfer credits?

If you have existing college credits, looking for a program that accepts transfer credits will shorten your time to graduation and reduce your tuition costs.

- Previous experience can be applied; evaluated on a case-by-case basis
- Ask for a FREE transfer credit evaluation

### 10. What type of academic support is available to online students?

Online learning is different from learning in a traditional classroom. Choose a school that provides academic support dedicated to online students.

- Student Success counselors are assigned to provide guidance and support your entire journey – from enrollment to graduation
- FREE online tutoring services
- Students are invited to quarterly calls with AU president to discuss their GPS experiences

### 11. Does the school offer career services for online students?

All schools have career-services staff to help students consider their options. Can you take advantage of these services online?

- Access to the Center for Community Engagement and Career Competitiveness (CCECC) via phone or in person

### 12. What library services are available for online students?

Research will be part of your online degree. What options will you have for completing research assignments? Will you have to come to campus to use library services?

- Online access to the Blount Library, which provides access to thousands of journals, books, and periodicals
- On-campus access with a student ID (issued after enrollment)

### 13. What is the average cost? Are fees transparent?

Ask your admissions representative about the average total cost of the degree you're considering. Reputable programs are transparent about fees. You should know what to expect.

- Admissions counselors will help you calculate tuition – and show you how to lock in your costs
- All fees are outlined on the website

### 14. What options does the school offer for paying for your education?

Many programs offer monthly payment plans, employer tuition assistance, military aid, as well as financial aid packages.

- Averett offers a variety of options, including financial aid as well as our Pay & Go plan, which allows you to pay for one course at a time. In addition, we also work with employer tuition assistance and reimbursement plans, as well as military tuition assistance and benefits.
- Admissions and Student Accounts teams will help you select the most appropriate financial option for your education



# HOW TO CHOOSE AN ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAM

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