

The World's Oldest University

Many universities around the world are proud to have long histories and strong traditions. However, very few universities can claim to be among the oldest in the world.

Nalanda University, in Bihar, India, was established around 600 BC. It was most likely the world's first university. In the past, scholars came from Europe, China, and all over India to learn about science, medicine, the Buddhist religion, and other subjects. The university is in ruins now, but at one time it was an impressive school with temples, classrooms, libraries, and dormitories.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the University of Al-Karaouine in Fes, Morocco, is the oldest surviving university in the world. It was probably founded in 859 and became a famous place to study natural sciences. In 1957, after more than 1,000 years as a university, Al-Karaouine added mathematics, physics, chemistry, and various foreign languages to its traditional list of subjects for study.

The first university in Europe is definitely the University of Bologna, in Italy. It was one of the few universities in Europe that were not influenced by religion. Professors were forbidden from teaching outside the university, and so students came from all over Europe to study with its famous teachers. Since opening in 1088, the University of Bologna has never closed its doors, despite the many wars in Europe.

With the success of the University of Bologna, other universities opened across Europe. They were started by kings, religious groups, and former professors. Today there are so many universities that students don't need to go far to study. They are sure to find one close to home.