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The Top Universities by Subject

Here you can view the subject-specific tables to see the ranking of particular universities (and also university colleges) in the subjects they teach. Note that these tables are not yet interactive because there are insufficient data in some areas, which would result in certain institutions being placed at the bottom of the rankings.

You can either select the table from the drop down box below or search for a specific subject:

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Introduction

Knowing where a university stands in the pecking order of higher education is a vital piece of information for any prospective student, but the quality of the course is what matters most. The most modest institution may have a centre of specialist excellence and even famous universities have mediocre departments. The following tables offer some pointers to the leading universities in a wide range of subjects.

New this year we have introduced the outcomes of the National Student Survey as an additional measure. Expert assessors have produced official ratings for research quality and, for the Education table, teaching quality. HESA provided information about students' entry qualifications as a guide to the calibre of undergraduates on different courses, and also about the destinations of undergraduates. The destination information draws a distinction between different types of employment: graduate employment, where a degree is normally required, and non-graduate employment. The tables give the percentage of "positive destinations" by adding those undertaking further study to the total in graduate employment.

To qualify for inclusion in a subject table, a university had to have data for at least two of the four measures. The figure 0 in the Entry Standards and Graduate Prospects columns is NOT a zero score but rather denotes that no valid data were available. Where no data were available, the final score was calculated on the data we have.

Cambridge is again by far the most successful university, with 43 top 10 placings including 36 top placings. Oxford has the next highest number of top places with five followed by the London School of Economics with four. The subject rankings demonstrate that there are "horses for courses" in higher education. Thus, the London School of Economics is more than a match for its rivals in the social sciences, while Imperial College confirms its reputation in engineering. In their own fields, table-toppers such as Loughborough (Sports Science see Hospitality) and Surrey (Food Science) are equally well-known.

In all the Tables, the following information is provided where it is available.

Student Satisfaction

This provides a measure of satisfaction with the learning experience and is taken from the National Student Survey carried out in 2007. It is the average score of the first fifteen questions of that survey. The Education Table uses teaching quality, as measured by the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of teacher training courses, in place of the National Student Survey.

Research Quality

This provides a measure of the average quality of research undertaken in the subject area. The first figure gives a quality rating 5* (top), 5, 4, 3a, 3b, 2 or 1(bottom). The letter refers to the proportion of staff included in the numerical assessment, with A including virtually everyone and F hardly anyone. These data are taken from the last research assessment exercise in 2001.

Entry Standards

This is the average UCAS tariff score for new first degree students under the age of 21, taken from HESA data for 2006–07. Each student's examination grades were converted to a numerical score (A level A=120, B=100, etc; Scottish Highers A=72, B=60, etc) and added up to give a total score. HESA then calculated an average score for each university.

Graduate Prospects

This is the percentage of graduates undertaking further study or graduate employment in the annual survey by HESA six months after graduation. Two years of data are aggregated to make the data more reliable and scores are withheld where the number of students is too small to calculate a reliable percentage. A low number on this measure does not necessarily mean that many graduates were unemployed – some could have obtained jobs that are

Mathematics

Rank	Institution	Student Satisfaction	RAE			Entry Standards	Graduate Prospects	Ove
			Pure	Applied	Stats			
1	Cambridge		5* A	5* A	5* B	553	90	100.
2	Oxford	4.22	5* B	5 A	5* C	538	88	94.4
3	Dundee			5 B		493	0	92.2
4	Imperial College	3.76	5* B	5* B	5 B	499	82	90.5
5	Durham	3.88	5 B	5* B	4 B	524	80	90.1
6	Bristol	3.64	5 B	5* A	5* A	474	80	89.9
7	Bath	3.74	5 A	5* B	5 B	477	82	89.7
8	Surrey	3.99		5 A	5 A	399	84	89.5
9	St Andrews	4.06	5 B	5 B	5 A	502	76	89.3
10	Warwick	3.64	5 B	5* A	5* B	514	76	88.9
11	London School of Economics	3.66			4 B	506	88	88.9
12	Leicester	4.31	5 B	5 B		332	84	88.1
13	University College London	3.84	5 B	5 B	5 B	474	78	88.0
14	Strathclyde	3.85		5 B	4 C	546	70	86.9
15	Nottingham	3.84	5 B	5 B	5 A	449	74	86.7
16	Birmingham	4.04	5 C	5 B	4 B	431	78	86.7
17	Lancaster	4.06	4 A		5* B	413	70	86.5
18	Edinburgh	3.74	5* A	5 B	4 C	479	70	86.5
19	York	3.77	5 B	5 A		442	72	86.3
20	Keele		2 C	5 A	3a A	304	88	86.3
21	Heriot-Watt	3.90		5 B	5 C	444	74	86.1
22	Glasgow	3.93	5 D	5 A	5 A	443	74	85.8
23	Southampton	3.74	5 C	5 B	5 A	413	76	85.7
24	Cardiff	3.74	5 A			400	68	84.7

not usually considered graduate jobs.

FOOTNOTES

East and South Asian Studies

Other universities which offer courses in this subject, but which do not have sufficient data to appear in the table, include: Birmingham, Central Lancashire, Lampeter, Liverpool John Moores, Nottingham Trent, Westminster.

Librarianship & Information Management

Other universities which offer courses in this subject, but which do not have sufficient data to appear in the table, include: West of Scotland.

Middle Eastern and African Studies

Other universities which offer courses in this subject, but which do not have sufficient data to appear in the table, include: Lampeter.

Veterinary Medicine

Other universities which offer courses in this subject, but which do not have sufficient data to appear in the table, include: Nottingham.

Criteria

1 Subject table has 10 or fewer institutions

2 Institutions offering courses in UCAS for entry in 2008 in the relevant subject(s)

Who's in the top ten?

	Appearances in Subject Tables	Top Places	Times in Top Ten	Percentage in Top Ten
1 Cambridge	43	36	43	100.0
2 Imperial College	14	0	14	100.0
3 Oxford	32	5	32	100.0
4 London School of Economics	12	4	11	91.7
5 St Andrews	25	0	20	80.0
6 Warwick	25	1	20	80.0
7 University College London	37	2	27	73.0
8 Bath	25	0	18	72.0
9 Bristol	38	1	28	73.7
10 Durham	32	0	22	68.8
11 Loughborough	27	3	15	55.6
12 Edinburgh	49	0	26	53.1
13 King's College London	29	0	15	51.7
14 Royal Agricultural College	2	0	1	50.0
15 Sheffield	41	0	20	48.8
16 York	21	2	10	47.6
17 Dundee	23	1	10	43.5
18 Exeter	30	0	13	43.3
19 Strathclyde	22	1	9	40.9
20 Surrey	26	1	10	38.5
21 Nottingham	44	1	15	34.1
22 Harper Adams	3	0	1	33.3
23 Newcastle	36	0	12	33.3
24 SOAS	9	0	3	33.3
25 University of the Arts, London	3	0	1	33.3

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