

Universities: engaging with local communities

2007



Universities have a massive impact on their locality, not only as a result of the – often large – movement of people at the beginning and end of terms. Their social and cultural impact is felt through their provision of sports facilities, art galleries, cinemas and theatres, while as employers, and providers of skilled graduates, universities contribute to their local economies.

In the last 50 years, there has been a large increase in the number of universities and in the number of students. The Government's target for 50% of 18–30 year olds to participate in some form of higher education by 2010 means that this expansion is likely to continue.

One of the core aims of UK higher education is to meet the needs of the wider community, and the expansion of higher education has had an increasing impact on that community.

This leaflet looks at the impact of universities on their localities, highlighting the benefits as well as acknowledging some of the issues that can arise. It also looks at good practice and how universities have been working to improve community relations.



Universities UK

Economic contribution to the community

Knock-on economic effects

Higher education Institutions (HEIs) are large employers, often the largest in their locality. Generating almost £45 billion of output a year, HEIs are a larger part of the economy than either the UK pharmaceutical or aircraft industries .

- For every 100 university jobs, a further 99 are created in the wider economy by a 'knock-on' process.
- Higher education generated 606,400 jobs throughout the UK economy in 2003/04 through direct and knock-on effects.

Working with business

Universities carry out research which local businesses are able to exploit. Local businesses may also commission their own research from the university. This 'knowledge transfer' attracts new business to the region to use these benefits. There are now almost 100 science parks and clusters linked to universities.

Two thirds of universities provide distance learning for businesses, with 80% providing short courses on business premises. In addition, universities offer degrees in entrepreneurship and work with employers to develop business-focused degrees and enhance graduate employability.

Spin-out companies

- Universities 'spin-out' companies to develop their research.
- These spin-out companies are worth more than £3bn to the UK economy – in 2003/04 UK HEIs had over 1,000 active 'spin-out' companies, employing 15,000.

Output generated in the economy

	Activity of higher education institutions
Direct output	£16.87 billion
Secondary or 'Knock-on' output generated in other sectors of the economy	£25.63 billion
Total output generated (ie, Direct plus Secondary)	£42.5 billion

Source:

The impact of higher education institutions on the UK economy
Universities UK, 2006

Cultural, sporting and lifelong learning contribution

Cultural and social facilities

Universities enrich their local communities through a variety of activities and facilities. For example, many universities have museums, housing important artefacts and collections, and which in total attract two million visitors a year. These museums are often a welcome first introduction to a university campus for local residents.

University art galleries, botanic gardens, libraries, theatres, concert halls, film showings and many other activities help to provide a colourful and lively environment for local residents, and make a huge cultural contribution to the community. These facilities are regularly available for the wider public, and many shows and performances by student groups are cheaply available for all.

Lifelong learning

Making knowledge and education accessible to people living and working in the local region is a key activity for universities through continuing education programmes, evening classes, part-time study, and public lectures. Over 10,000 academic staff days were dedicated to free public lectures in 2003/04, for over 400,000 attendees.

Sporting facilities

Many top class sporting facilities are provided by universities. Across England and Wales these are open to the public 71% of the time, while in Scotland, 91% of higher education institutions offer pay-as-you go access to the public. Sport and university facilities are used as part of initiatives to help deliver social inclusion, reduce crime, promote lifelong learning and improve health.

Reaching out: sports partnerships

% of institutions in partnership with:	Scotland	England
Local sports clubs (amateur and professional)	62	88
Sports governing bodies	62	74
Local authorities	77	69
Other HE/FE institutions	46	63
Other schools	54	58
Specialist sports colleges	n/a	42

Source:
Participating and performing
Universities UK, 2004

Figures from:
Sport England Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector 2004 and *sportscotland Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector in Scotland 2003*

Educating the workforce

Universities educate many professionals who support the local region, such as architects, teachers, engineers, health professionals and lawyers.

All this attracts more businesses to locate near universities, thereby boosting the local economy and providing additional employment.

Highly skilled occupations will make up an increasing part of the workforce over the coming years and, as Lord Leitch's Report in December 2006 showed, increasing higher-level skills will have a significant impact on the UK's overall productivity.

- The percentage of adults holding a degree or equivalent has increased from 19 to 27% over the past 10 years but this is still well below the 40% achieved in Canada and America.
- Local businesses benefit from taking students on sandwich placements or foundation degrees and as flexible part-time labour.
- Graduates are more likely to work in the region of their university, for example 62% of graduates in the North West stay and work in the region post graduation.

Universities and healthcare in the community

Universities make an essential contribution to the NHS. They educate future healthcare professionals, research into cures and treatments, and their staff and students care for patients.

- In 2005/06 over 269,000 students in higher education studied a variety of health related subjects, an increase of 22% since 2001/02.
- 11% of doctors and dentists who work as consultants in the NHS are employed by universities.

Selected subjects studied 2005/06

Overall number of students	2,336,000
Medicine, dentistry, subjects allied to health	369,000
Biological sciences	155,200
Veterinary science	4,400
Creative arts and design	156,300
Engineering and technology	136,600
Computer science	120,100
Architecture, building and planning	56,400
Law	89,600
Business and administrative studies	304,400
Education including teacher training	207,700

Students in the community

Student volunteering

Students actively contribute to local life through their participation in volunteering schemes. These may include conservation work, working with children, running tea parties for older people and supporting people with disabilities. The commitment can be substantial. In 2003 there were 42,000 student volunteers who gave 3,459,653 hours to their community.

Social justice and mobility

Universities play a key role in ensuring social justice and increased social mobility. Widening participation, to ensure that all those with the ability to benefit from higher education are able to access it, is a key aim of universities. Projects to widen participation include schemes to attract those with no family history of higher education. This may include visits to primary and secondary schools, summer schools and mentoring projects. Universities also work with asylum seekers and refugees providing education and training.

Local business

Students buying goods locally make a significant contribution to the local economy, ensuring the viability of some retail businesses and helping to increase the range of goods, services and attractions available to the community.

Car parking

63% of students never drive and a further 14% only drive occasionally. However, on-street car parking is an issue that can cause concern among local residents.

To address some of these issues some universities set up or subsidise bus services, which link campuses to the town or city centre and the local area. Such bus services play a key role in the wider community, as they provide public transport to local residents and reduce car use.

Anti-social behaviour

Examples of anti-social behaviour by students are occasionally highlighted in the local press. Universities, while not being *in loco parentis*, tackle these issues in many ways, providing late-night bus services from bars and clubs, developing 'red card' schemes with the local police and using university disciplinary procedures where needed. However, it is important to note that graduates and students are least likely to commit crime and that the vast majority of incidents are minor – although of course these can cause distress to those affected.

Many universities have community liaison officers, and operate helplines for local residents to report and resolve problems. For more information or help, contact your local university.

Accommodation

While many students live at home when at university, including many of the 40% of students who study part-time, there are also large numbers who move to the region and will need accommodation. This can be provided through university-managed accommodation, such as halls of residence, and through private housing within local communities.

Universities contribute to the regeneration of inner cities and rundown areas through the building of new accommodation and reclaiming of empty property. In 2003/04 HEIs obtained European Union and Regional Development Agency grants worth more than £200m for urban and regional regeneration.

However this inflow of students can result in unintended consequences that can cause friction within the local community. These may include: students as noisy neighbours – either through late-night parties or coming home late; students can be away from their houses for large parts of the year – tempting burglars to the area; and house prices can rise when private landlords buy houses to let to students, which may lead to the displacement of local families.

Universities are committed to working in partnership to tackle these challenges, as well as fully realising the opportunities. This partnership involves consultation and discussions between different organisations and stakeholders – HEIs, local authorities and central government, students' unions, private rented sector and community groups.

UNITE

'Research from UNITE's 2007 Student Experience Report shows that students living with a corporate accommodation provider feel the greatest sense of community.'

UNITE is the UK's largest student hospitality provider and is home to some 35,000 students in 30 towns and cities across the UK. UNITE has worked extensively to create safe and secure environments for their customers as well as working collaboratively with the local community and their stakeholders to ensure a consultative approach on all new accommodation developments. This in turn creates more balanced communities where students feel at home and actively pursue working, contributing and ultimately staying within the community post graduation.

UNITE believes that good quality student accommodation is beneficial for communities and the regeneration of cities. We would like to talk to you about how we can work together to enhance the growth and development of university cities in the future.

For more information about UNITE visit www.unite-group.co.uk

Supported by
The heart of
student living



Planning

The 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the subsequent Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) introduced the importance of community involvement in planning processes and introduced the necessity of a 'Statement of Community Involvement'. This development aims for good community liaison to continue to grow in importance.

The university sector is also currently monitoring developments as part of the ongoing Government consultation surrounding the Barker Review of Land Use Planning and taxation changes relating to planning-gain supplement (PGS) as announced in the December 2006 *Pre-Budget Report*. Our aim will be to ensure that the proposed taxation changes don't adversely affect new public benefit building developments.

Parliamentary interest is increasing in 2007 with active consideration being given to establishing an all-party parliamentary group on balanced communities looking at students and the communities in which they live.

Universities UK's publications can be found at:
<http://bookshop.Universitiesuk.ac.uk/>

This leaflet is a companion to the Universities UK/SCOP/LGA publication, *'Studentification': a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice*.

Having a university in the community has other benefits relating to citizenship and values. A 2003 report from HEFCE, the English higher education funding council, highlighted the wide ranging non-economic benefits of higher education. These included greater racial tolerance among graduates, a higher probability of voting in general elections and greater community activity through participation in voluntary associations.

Key sources

- *'Studentification': a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice*
Universities UK/SCOP/LGA (2006)
- *The Economic Impact of higher education institutions on the UK economy*
Universities UK (2006)
- *Higher level learning – Universities and employers working together*
Universities UK (2006)
- *Student Experience Report*
MORI/UNITE (2006)
- *Participating and performing: sport and higher education in the UK*
Universities UK (2004)
- *Partners in Care – Universities and the NHS*
Universities UK (2003)
- *Revisiting the benefits of higher education*
HEFCE (2003)
- *UK University Commercialisation Survey: Financial Year 2003*
UNICO (2004)

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including policy documents
and publications visit the
Universities UK website:**

www.UniversitiesUK.ac.uk



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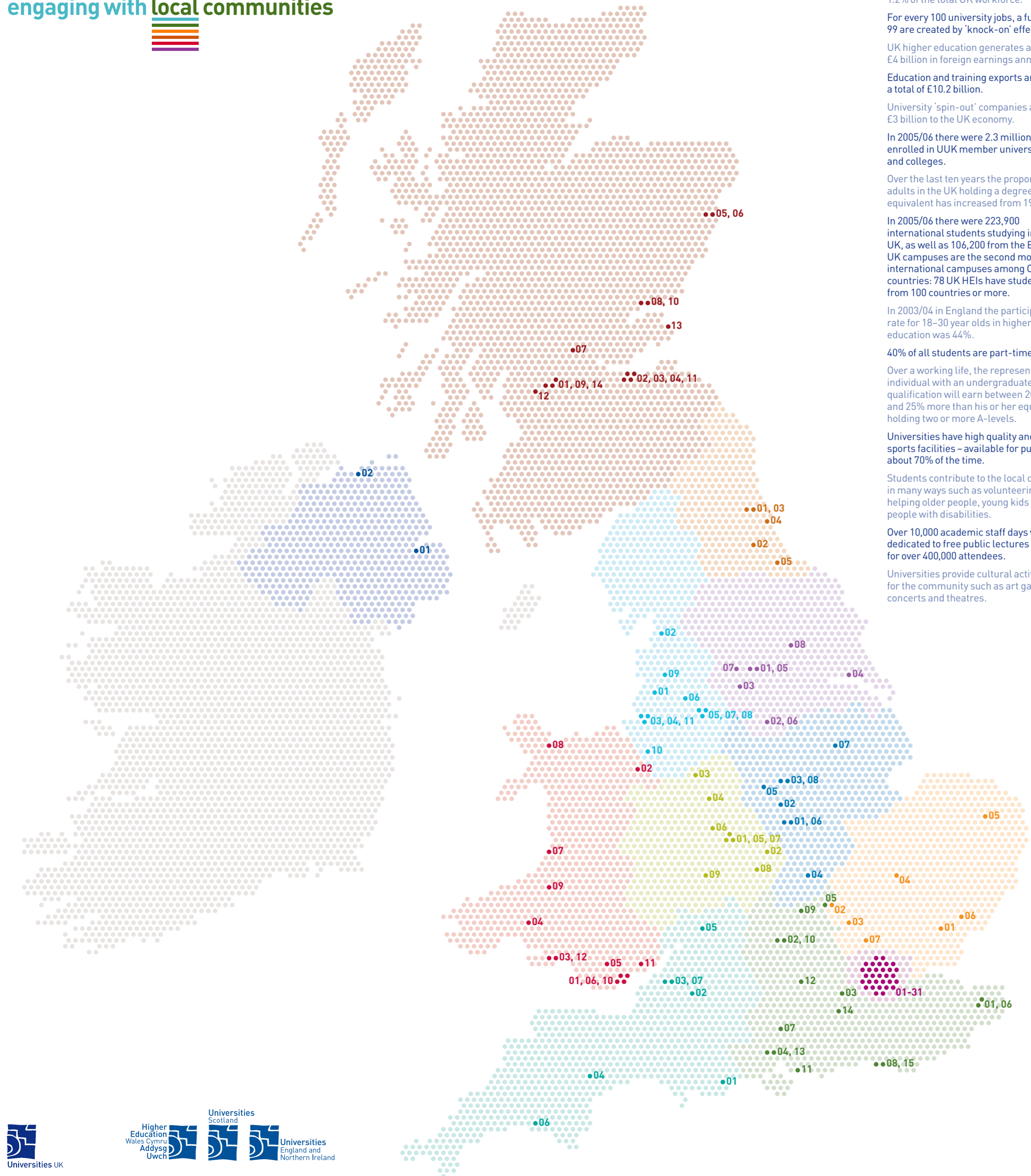


Universities
Scotland



Universities
England and
Northern Ireland

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The impact of universities

Universities employ over 340,000 staff; 1.2% of the total UK workforce.

For every 100 university jobs, a further 99 are created by 'knock-on' effects.

UK higher education generates about £4 billion in foreign earnings annually.

Education and training exports are worth a total of £10.2 billion.

University 'spin-out' companies are worth £3 billion to the UK economy.

In 2005/06 there were 2.3 million students enrolled in UUK member universities and colleges.

Over the last ten years the proportion of adults in the UK holding a degree or equivalent has increased from 19 to 27%.

In 2005/06 there were 223,900 international students studying in the UK, as well as 106,200 from the EU. UK campuses are the second most international campuses among OECD countries: 78 UK HEIs have students from 100 countries or more.

In 2003/04 in England the participation rate for 18–30 year olds in higher education was 44%.

40% of all students are part-time students.

Over a working life, the representative individual with an undergraduate qualification will earn between 20% and 25% more than his or her equivalent holding two or more A-levels.

Universities have high quality and varied sports facilities – available for public use about 70% of the time.

Students contribute to the local community in many ways such as volunteering helping older people, young kids and people with disabilities.

Over 10,000 academic staff days were dedicated to free public lectures in 2003/04 for over 400,000 attendees.

Universities provide cultural activities for the community such as art galleries, concerts and theatres.

Northern Ireland

- 01 Queen's University of Belfast
- 02 University of Ulster

Scotland

- 01 Glasgow Caledonian University
- 02 Heriot-Watt University
- 03 Napier University
- 04 Queen Margaret University
- 05 The Robert Gordon University
- 06 The University of Aberdeen
- 07 The University of Stirling
- 08 The University of Dundee
- 09 The University of Glasgow
- 10 University of Abertay Dundee
- 11 University of Edinburgh
- 12 University of Paisley
- 13 University of St Andrews
- 14 University of Strathclyde

Wales

- 01 Cardiff University
- 02 North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
- 03 Swansea Institute of Higher Education
- 04 Trinity College
- 05 University of Glamorgan
- 06 University of Wales
- 07 University of Wales, Aberystwyth
- 08 University of Wales, Bangor
- 09 University of Wales, Lampeter
- 10 University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
- 11 University of Wales, Newport
- 12 University of Wales, Swansea

London

- 01 Birkbeck College
- 02 Brunel University
- 03 Central School of Speech and Drama
- 04 City University
- 05 Goldsmiths College
- 06 Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- 07 Imperial College London
- 08 Institute of Education
- 09 King's College London
- 10 Kingston University
- 11 London Business School
- 12 London Metropolitan University
- 13 London School of Economics and Political Science
- 14 London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- 15 London South Bank University
- 16 Middlesex University
- 17 Queen Mary, University of London
- 18 Roehampton University
- 19 Royal Academy of Music
- 20 Royal College of Art
- 21 Royal College of Music
- 22 St George's, University of London
- 23 School of Oriental and African Studies
- 24 Thames Valley University
- 25 The Royal Veterinary College
- 26 University College London
- 27 University of East London
- 28 University of Greenwich
- 29 University of London
- 30 University of the Arts London
- 31 University of Westminster

South West

- 01 Bournemouth University
- 02 University of Bath
- 03 University of Bristol
- 04 University of Exeter
- 05 University of Gloucestershire
- 06 University of Plymouth
- 07 University of the West of England, Bristol

South East

- 01 Canterbury Christ Church University
- 02 Oxford Brookes University
- 03 Royal Holloway, University of London
- 04 Southampton Solent University
- 05 The Open University
- 06 The University of Kent
- 07 The University of Winchester
- 08 University of Brighton
- 09 University of Buckingham
- 10 University of Oxford
- 11 University of Portsmouth
- 12 University of Reading
- 13 University of Southampton
- 14 University of Surrey
- 15 University of Sussex

Eastern England

- 01 Anglia Ruskin University
- 02 Cranfield University
- 03 University of Bedfordshire
- 04 University of Cambridge
- 05 University of East Anglia
- 06 University of Essex
- 07 University of Hertfordshire

West Midlands

- 01 Aston University
- 02 Coventry University
- 03 Keele University
- 04 Staffordshire University
- 05 The University of Birmingham
- 06 The University of Wolverhampton
- 07 University of Central England in Birmingham
- 08 University of Warwick
- 09 University of Worcester

East Midlands

- 01 De Montfort University
- 02 Loughborough University
- 03 The Nottingham Trent University
- 04 The University of Northampton
- 05 University of Derby
- 06 University of Leicester
- 07 University of Lincoln
- 08 University of Nottingham

North East

- 01 Newcastle University
- 02 University of Durham
- 03 University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- 04 University of Sunderland
- 05 University of Teesside

Yorkshire and Humber

- 01 Leeds Metropolitan University
- 02 Sheffield Hallam University
- 03 The University of Huddersfield
- 04 The University of Hull
- 05 The University of Leeds
- 06 The University of Sheffield
- 07 University of Bradford
- 08 University of York

North West

- 01 Edge Hill University
- 02 Lancaster University
- 03 Liverpool Hope University
- 04 Liverpool John Moores University
- 05 The Manchester Metropolitan University
- 06 The University of Bolton
- 07 The University of Manchester
- 08 The University of Salford
- 09 University of Central Lancashire
- 10 University of Chester
- 11 University of Liverpool

Notes

- Where a university has more than one campus, we have used the administrative centre as the location.
- The regional allocation is based on that of the HERO website, www.hero.ac.uk
- The map reflects current Universities UK Members.

