

Universities: engaging with local communities

This leaflet illustrates the many ways in which universities impact on the local area.

Universities are a major contributor to the economy in their own right, both as employers and purchasers of goods.

Their social and cultural influence is also felt through their provision of:

- **art galleries, museums and exhibitions**
- **cinemas and theatres**
- **employment for local economy**
- **free lectures and debates**
- **skilled graduates**
- **sport opportunities and facilities**

One of the core aims of UK higher education is to meet the needs of the wider community.

The expansion of higher education has increased the facilities available to those communities.

Working with local businesses

Services for business

Universities carry out research which local businesses are able to exploit. Local businesses may also commission their own research from the university.

Universities also offer:

- access to specialist facilities, such as science parks and incubator facilities for new businesses
- bespoke education for company workforces
- consultancy services, such as advice on developing patents
- continuing professional development for local businesses and their employees

These 'knowledge exchanges' also attract new business to the region who are keen to use these services.

There are now almost 100 science parks linked to universities. Two thirds of universities provide distance learning for businesses, with nearly nine out of ten providing short courses on business premises. In addition, universities offer degrees, modules or other support for students in developing entrepreneurship, and work with employers to develop business-focused degrees and enhance graduate employability.

Universities continue to adapt their services to meet the needs of business. Ninety-three per cent provide an enquiry point for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and bespoke courses off-campus.

Help in the economic downturn

Universities have also been helping to support local employers survive the economic downturn and build for the future. Government matched-funding aimed at supporting university-business collaboration also meant that some of the services have been free or available at a subsidised rate.

Want to find out more?

An interactive map on the UUK website now allows direct access to the business contact and services on offer at each university in the country. Please visit www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/business-help for further information.

Spin-out companies

Universities often create enterprises to develop their research and inventions. There are just under 1,000 of these established 'spin-out' companies, employing 14,000 people with a combined turnover of £1.1 billion.



Acting as an economic catalyst

Overall economic impact

Higher education institutions (HEIs) generate £59 billion to the economy a year, an increase of £14 billion since 2004. This includes £32.4 billion generated in other sectors. They are larger than either the pharmaceutical or advertising industries and are also major employers, often the largest in the area.

For every 100 university jobs, a further 100 are created in the wider economy by a 'knock-on' process. Higher education generated 668,569 jobs throughout the UK economy through direct and knock-on effects.

Higher education as an export

The higher education sector is also a valuable export industry for the country. Gross export earnings for the sector are estimated to be over £5.3 billion. This includes the international revenue earned directly by the universities, together with the money spent by international students and visitors to UK higher education institutions.

The higher education sector also spends some £19.5 billion on goods and services produced in the UK.

Overall Impact of the UK higher education sector on the UK economy

	HEIs	International students	International visitors	The HE sector
Direct output	£23.44 billion	0	0	£23.44 billion
Secondary output	£32.36 billion	£3.26 billion	£0.19 billion	£35.81 billion
Total output generated (direct plus secondary)	£55.80 billion	£3.26 billion	£0.19 billion	£59.25 billion

Source

The impact of universities on the UK economy
Universities UK, 2009



About Universities UK

This publication has been produced by Universities UK, which is the representative body for the executive heads of UK universities and is recognised as the umbrella group for the university sector. It works to advance the interests of universities and to spread good practice through-out the higher education sector.

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Opening up knowledge, expertise and facilities to the local community

Cultural and social facilities

Universities enrich their local communities through a variety of activities and facilities. For example, many universities showcase exhibitions, often free of charge, housing important artefacts and collections. These attract around five million visitors a year.

The exhibitions, along with public lectures, and music and drama performances, 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. These facilities are regularly available for the wider public, and many shows and performances by student groups are also often free of charge and 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 evening classes, continuing education programmes, part-time study and public lectures.

Over 16,000 academic staff days are dedicated to free public lectures each year for over 750,000 attendees. The events allow the public to hear and question some of the most distinguished scholars in the world.

Sporting opportunities and facilities

Higher education plays a significant part in community sport. Universities, in partnership with students' unions, are often involved in delivering local sports initiatives that can help deliver social inclusion, reduce crime and improve health. Many relationships already exist between universities and community sport, for example with local authorities, schools, community sport clubs and governing bodies of sport.

In England, 95 per cent of higher education institutions have a facility usage arrangement with a local sports club, providing much needed facilities for them.

Across England and Wales university sports facilities are open to the public over 70 per cent of the time, while in Scotland, over 90 per cent of higher education institutions offer pay-as-you go access to the public.

Not all relationships are based on sports facility usage though, as higher education provides many jobs for community sport and coach education.

Reaching out: sports partnerships

Percentage of institutions in partnership

Local sports clubs	95%
Local authority	84%
National governing bodies of sport	83%
School sports partnerships	77%
Other FE/HE institutions	69%

Source

Higher Education and Community Sport Audit 2009
Sport England



Higher education in the local workforce

Universities educate many professionals who support the local region, such as architects, teachers, engineers, health professionals and lawyers. This attracts more businesses to locate near universities, thereby boosting the local economy and providing additional employment.

Universities and healthcare in the community

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

- Over 510,000 students in higher education study a variety of health related subjects.
- Of those, nearly 62,000 were studying either medicine or dentistry and nearly 168,000 were training to be nurses.
- All student doctors, nurses and midwives spend a significant proportion of their time in practice, working under supervision.

Meeting skills needs of the local economy

An increasing number of jobs in the UK workforce will require high-level skills over the coming years. As a landmark report in 2006 by Lord Leitch confirmed, equipping the workforce with these skills will have a significant impact on the UK's overall productivity.

- The percentage of adults holding a degree or equivalent has increased from 23 per cent in 1997 to 32 per cent over the past ten years. Although this is slightly above the OECD average it is still well below the 48 per cent achieved in Canada and 40 per cent in the United States of America.
- Universities also offer programmes developed in collaboration with employers or delivered partly in the workplace. These include foundation degrees and flexible part-time study.
- Graduates are more likely to work in the region of their university. For example, seven out of ten graduates in the North West stay and work in the region after graduation. The average figure for all UK regions is 65 per cent.



Students in the community

Student volunteering

The commitment from student volunteers through students' unions is substantial. Every year, 67,000 students volunteer with a charity and the most common reason given is to help in their local community.

Students actively contribute to local life through their participation in volunteering schemes, including:

- conservation work, such as repainting and refurbishing local parks and play areas
- helping the elderly
- organising recycling and rubbish collections
- supporting people with disabilities
- working with children, for example, after school workshops and mentoring

Universities increasingly work in partnership with students' unions to identify ways in which they can have a positive impact on their local communities. By working together, students' unions and universities increase the effectiveness of their work through the sharing of expertise, resource and contacts.

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 all universities. Universities undertake a wide range of initiatives and projects to widen participation including schemes to attract those with no family history of higher education.

Universities also engage extensively with local secondary and primary schools and colleges to help raise attainment levels and to encourage those with the ability and aptitude to apply to university. Many universities provide local schools and colleges with a number of opportunities, including:

- campus visits
- conferences
- encouraging recent graduates to act as mentors for students
- masterclasses on specific subjects
- summer schools
- sport in schools and the community
- taster days

Universities also work with asylum seekers and refugees to provide education and training.



Purchasing local goods

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

Average spend by full time English domiciled students on living costs is £6,496, which breaks down into:

- £1,724 on food
- £1,828 on personal items (eg clothes, toiletries, mobile phones, CDs, magazines and cigarettes)
- £1,154 on entertainment
- £1,343 on travel
- £279 on household goods

This equates to expenditure of around £7.9 billion.

International students contribute an enormous amount to local businesses too. Personal (off-campus) expenditure of international students and visitors to higher education institutions in the UK amounts to £2.3 billion. This is equivalent to 14 per cent of all UK receipts from overseas visitors to the country.

Key sources

Student volunteers: a national profile, Institute for Volunteering Research 2010

Living together, working together Universities UK/NUS/GuildHE 2010

From recession to recovery Universities UK 2009

Higher education-business and community interaction survey Higher Education Funding Council for England 2009

Student income and expenditure survey Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2009

Higher Education and Community Sport Audit Sport England 2009

Destination of leavers survey 2007-08 Higher Education Funding Council for England 2009

The impact of universities on the UK economy Universities UK 2009

Higher level learning – universities and employers working together Universities UK 2006

Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills Leitch Review of Skills 2006

Participating and performing: sport and higher education in the UK Universities UK 2004

Student volunteering: the national survey Student Volunteering England 2003



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The impact of universities: in summary

Universities directly employ over 372,400 staff; 1.2 per cent of the total UK workforce.

For every 100 university jobs, a further 100 are created by 'knock-on' effects. Higher education generates 668,569 jobs throughout the UK economy through direct and knock-on effects.

Gross export earnings for the sector are estimated to be over £5.3 billion.

The higher education sector spends some £19.5 billion on goods and services produced in the UK.

Over the last ten years the proportion of adults in the UK holding a degree or equivalent has increased from 23 per cent to 32 per cent.

International student expenditure generates almost £3.3 billion of output across the economy and over 27,800 jobs.

There are nearly 230,000 international students studying in the UK, as well as over 100,000 from the EU.

UK campuses are the second most international campuses among OECD countries: 87 UK higher education institutions have students from 100 countries or more.

Just under 40 per cent of all students at UK higher education institutions study part-time.

Universities have high quality and varied sport facilities – available for public use about 70 per cent of the time.

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

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

Northern Ireland

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

Scotland

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

Wales

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

London

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

South West

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

South East

- 01 Canterbury Christ Church University
- 02 Oxford Brookes University
- 03 Southampton Solent University
- 04 The Open University
- 05 The University of Buckingham
- 06 The University of Winchester
- 07 University of Brighton
- 08 University of Chichester
- 09 University of Kent
- 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 Birmingham City University
- 03 Coventry University
- 04 Keele University
- 05 Staffordshire University
- 06 The University of Warwick
- 07 University of Birmingham
- 08 University of Wolverhampton
- 09 University of Worcester

East Midlands

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

North East

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

Yorkshire and Humber

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

North West

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

Notes

- Where a university has more than one campus, we have used the administrative centre as the location.
- The map reflects current Universities UK Members.