

University Rich List 2020

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Introduction

Student loan debt ballooned to £140 billion at the end of March 2020. The government forecasts that this will reach £560 billion by the middle of this century. Combined with the fact that the government also predicts that only 25 per cent of current full-time undergraduate students who take out loans are expected to repay them in full, higher education is fast becoming a major financial issue.¹ This means that taxpayers are ultimately funding a substantial portion of higher education revenue in the UK. A reduction in the tuition fee cap - as proposed by the Augar review - would further exacerbate this subsidy.

At the same time, the coronavirus crisis has had a huge impact on student life. Some universities have moved to online courses, with the face-to-face contact hours and social life usually associated with university life reduced.² Many students feel that they are getting less value for money as a result.

Despite all this, university bosses are taking home substantial sums. This research presents total remuneration data for 2019-20 to highlight the spiralling increases in senior staff pay.

These findings are important, both to the students who attend these institutions and the taxpayers who are asked to subsidise them.

Key findings

- In 2019-20, there were at least **4,112** university staff with total remuneration of **more than £100,000**. Within this group, there were **860** on **more than £150,000**.
- This compares to **3,615** and **762** respectively in **2018-19**. This represents an increase of 14 per cent for those on more than £100,000 and 13 per cent for those on more than £150,000 in total remuneration
- The university with the greatest number of employees whose remuneration was in excess of **£100,000** was the **London School of Economics**, with **306** employees. This was also the university which had the highest number of employees receiving **over £150,000 at 109**.
- The **average number of employees** who received over **£100,000** in total remuneration per university is **44**. The average number receiving over **£150,000** is **9** employees per university.
- The **Open University** made loss of office payments totalling **£347,696**, the highest single pay out being **£128,575**.

¹ House of Commons Library, *Student Loan Statistics*, 5 October 2020, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01079/>, (accessed 15 October 2020).

² Morrison, S., Three of UK's biggest universities move to online learning due to coronavirus outbreaks, *Evening Standard*, 7 October 2020.

Data tables

Table 1: the ten universities with staff in receipt of remuneration over £100,000 and £150,000, 2019-20

University	Staff receiving over £100,000	University	Staff receiving over £150,000
London School of Economics	306	London School of Economics	109
Manchester	282	Manchester	86
Warwick	262	Warwick	66
Glasgow	210	City, University of London	60
City, University of London	188	Glasgow	55
Queen Mary	187	Liverpool	49
Liverpool	172	Bristol	31
Bristol	158	Durham	24
Durham	156	Open University	23
Open University	156	St George's, University of London	19

Table 2: number of highly paid staff by university group, 2019-20

University group	Receiving over £100,000	Receiving over £150,000
University Alliance	177	46
Million Plus	202	49
Russell Group	1,859	442
Unaffiliated	1,873	323

Table 3: number of highly paid staff by level of student satisfaction, 2019-20³

Satisfaction (%)	Receiving over £100,000	Receiving over £150,000
Less than 80	759	191
80-89	3,267	654
More than 89	86	15

³ Ibid.

Table 4: number of staff with total remuneration over £100,000 and £150,000, 2019-20

University	Staff paid over £100,000	Staff paid over £150,000
Abertay	11	3
Aberystwyth	Inadequate data	1
Arts University Bournemouth	7	3
Bath	124	9
Bath Spa	3	1
Birmingham City	11	6
Bishop Grosseteste	2	1
Bolton	6	4
Bournemouth	15	3
Bradford	31	6
Brighton	28	3
Bristol	158	31
Brunel	50	13
Buckinghamshire New University	5	2
Canterbury Christ Church	14	1
Cardiff Metropolitan	24	3
Central Lancashire	26	12
Chichester	11	1
City, University of London	188	60
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama	0	0
Cranfield University	42	Inadequate data
Coventry	27	9
Cumbria	4	1
Durham	156	24
East Anglia	43	4
Edge Hill	6	2
Edinburgh Napier	28	6
Essex	85	18
Exeter	126	Inadequate data
Glasgow	210	55
Glasgow School of Art	4	1
Greenwich	20	8
Harper Adams	3	1
Hertfordshire	8	2
Highlands and Islands	8	2
Huddersfield	51	8
Keele	17	2
King's College London	Inadequate data	3
Kingston	13	2
Leeds Arts University	4	1
Leeds Beckett	35	9
Leeds Trinity University	7	1

University	Staff paid over £100,000	Staff paid over £150,000
Leicester	65	Inadequate data
Liverpool	172	49
Liverpool Hope	12	4
Liverpool John Moores	39	9
Institute of Cancer Research	40	16
London School of Economics	306	109
London South Bank	10	3
Loughborough	56	7
Manchester	282	86
Manchester Metropolitan	51	10
Northampton	5	2
Northumbria	31	7
Nottingham Trent	30	4
Open University	156	23
Oxford Brookes	16	5
Plymouth Marjon	2	1
Queen Margaret	10	1
Queen Mary	187	9
Queen's – Belfast	Inadequate data	10
Ravensbourne	4	1
Reading	101	18
Robert Gordon	23	4
Royal Academy of Music	2	1
Royal Agricultural University	3	1
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	5	1
Royal College of Music	6	2
Royal Holloway	117	Inadequate data
Royal Northern College of Music	1	0
Royal Veterinary College	19	4
Sheffield Hallam	14	4
South Wales	19	2
St Andrews	48	6
St George's, University of London	33	19
St Mary's	9	1
Stirling	36	4
Strathclyde	63	11
Suffolk	3	3
Sunderland	23	4
Sussex	80	Inadequate data
Swansea	65	10
Trinity Laban	7	1
University for the Creative Arts	2	1
University of the Arts London	22	1

University	Staff paid over £100,000	Staff paid over £150,000
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	4	1
Warwick	262	66
West London	8	3
West of Scotland	10	2
Westminster	12	2
Winchester	2	2
Wolverhampton	11	1
Worcester	6	2
Wrexham Glyndŵr	7	2
Writtle University College	1	0
York St John	3	3

Methodology

This research was conducted by contacting 151 universities through a freedom of information request. The information requested was:

- The number of individuals employed at your institution in receipt of total remuneration of more than £100,000 for the tax year 2019-20.*
- The number of individuals employed at your institution in receipt of over £150,000 in total remuneration for the tax year 2019-20.*

The data requested was for the financial year 2019-20. The information provided was a mixture between this and universities' accounting year, which often runs from August to July.

Total remuneration includes salary, performance related pay and other bonuses, pension-related payments, compensation for loss of office, other taxable benefits, non-taxable benefits, and all other payments.

Of those universities contacted, 125 responded to the FOI request by 16 October 2020. Of these, 93 universities provided the data requested pertaining to remuneration in excess of £100,000, and 91 provided data pertaining to remuneration in excess of £150,000.

Of the 26 universities that did not fulfil the request, the two most common reasons were that provision of the data would have taken longer than the time or cost limit for a freedom of information request (this was cited by universities such as Oxford and Cambridge). The other was that the information requested (most often relating to individuals earning over £150,000) could be used to identify employees. This was in spite of the information requested not requiring individual identification.

The total figure is likely to be significantly higher since over a quarter of universities did not respond with adequate data. Many institutions also only provided salary data, rather than total remuneration.

When an institution cited fewer than five employees in a response, a mid-way amount of three was used in the data set. In all other cases where a pay band or number band was given, the middle amount of the banding provided was used.