

# The Research Output of United Kingdom Economics Departments: Some League Tables

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## ABSTRACT

*This article presents three league tables for the research output of United Kingdom economics departments. We base these tables on the numbers of articles published, each table with different emphasis. The first table values all published articles equally; the second table is based on the publications in core journals only; the third table weighs articles in core journals more heavily than other articles.*

*Notable results include the finding that the London School of Economics heads the league in all the tables, and that several 'new universities' outperform some of the older universities.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

WE CONSTRUCT three league tables for the research output of United Kingdom Economics Departments. In doing so, we measure research output for any university using the number of articles for which at least one of the authors is affiliated with the university. We include articles published in journals and collective volumes, but do not include discussion or working papers.

The first league table is based on the total number of articles published. This most simple designation includes all articles on an equal footing and counts the sheer volume of output.

In the second table only publications in 'core' journals are counted. Since certain journals are viewed by some as more prestigious, it is appropriate to look at articles appearing in these in a separate table. Therefore, in general, good performance in Table 2 indicates stronger papers and stronger research output of a department.

The third table is based on weighting articles in core journals more heavily than other articles. This acknowledges mass output of total papers published, but also includes a greater value for articles in stronger journals.

To count the articles, we used the EconLit database published by the American Economic Association. This is a searchable database available on CD-ROM, covering the period January 1984 to March 2000. The database has some limitations. For example, author affiliations are not given prior to 1987. This precludes the inclusion of any articles before that year. However, this also means that this paper emphasises more recent research. So, our tables cover

the period 1987 to March 2000.

For the University of Wales, we have been unable to provide figures for each campus of the University because in 163 cases the affiliation reported was simply the 'University of Wales' without a specified campus. Accordingly we have recorded all the campuses together under the title 'University of Wales'.

Some new universities have listings under their former names, for example, Middlesex University and Leeds Metropolitan University used to be called Middlesex Polytechnic and Leeds Polytechnic. Therefore we have included the articles from the old name together with the current name.

## 2. THE LEAGUE TABLE FOR ALL ARTICLES

Table 1 gives the league table based on the total number of article published in all journals and collective volumes included in the database. All articles are weighted equally.

**Table 1: League table based on total number of articles**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Articles</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Articles</i>
1	London School of Economics	1863	25	University of Exeter	310
2	University of Oxford	1560	26	University of Edinburgh	305
3	University of Cambridge	1456	27	University of Sheffield	300
4	University of York	1178	28	University of Liverpool	269
5	University of Warwick	940	29	University of Leicester	264
6	University College London	922	30	University of Durham	252
7	University of Wales	780	31	University of Kent at Canterbury	241
8	University of Manchester	768	31	University of Aberdeen	241
9	University of Sussex	735	33	University of Bradford	225
10	University of Nottingham	689	34	University of Stirling	221
11	Newcastle upon Tyne	616	35	University of Bath	218
12	University of Reading	575	36	Heriot-Watt University	209
13	University of Birmingham	559	37	Queen's University, Belfast	208
14	London Business School	528	38	Queen Mary and Westfield College	202
15	University of Leeds	413	38	University of Surrey	202
16	University of Glasgow	411	40	Keele University	194
17	University of Essex	406	41	University of Hull	179
18	University of Strathclyde	401	42	University of Ulster	174
19	University of East Anglia	392	42	University of St. Andrews	174
20	City University	384	44	University of Dundee	157
21	University of Southampton	382	45	Brunel University	146
22	Lancaster University	377	46	University of Portsmouth	144
23	University of Bristol	340	47	Imperial College of Science & Tech.	140
24	Loughborough University	313	48	Manchester Metropolitan Univ.	139

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49	London Guildhall University	131	72	University of Westminster	31
50	University of East London	124	73	University of Plymouth	30
51	University of Salford	121	74	Oxford Brookes University	27
52	UMIST	96	75	University of Sunderland	25
53	Sheffield Hallam University	92	76	University of Greenwich	24
54	South Bank University	86	76	University of Brighton	24
55	Staffordshire University	82	78	University of Central Lancashire	23
56	Middlesex University	73	79	The Robert Gordon University	20
57	Univ. of the West of England, Bristol	71	80	University of North London	16
58	Royal Holloway & Bedford New Coll.	68	81	Anglia Polytechnic University	15
59	King's College London	67	81	Univ. Central England Birmingham	15
60	De Montfort University	63	81	University of Abertay Dundee	15
61	Aston University	57	84	University of Huddersfield	14
62	Leeds Metropolitan University	53	85	Univ. Lincs. and Humberside	13
63	SOAS	51	86	Goldsmiths College	12
64	Kingston University	50	86	University of Wolverhampton	12
65	Nottingham Trent University	49	88	University of Glamorgan	11
66	Univ. Northumbria at Newcastle	47	88	Bournemouth University	11
67	Glasgow Caledonian Univ.	43	90	University of Derby	10
68	University of Hertfordshire	43	91	Napier University	9
69	Liverpool John Moores Univ.	39	92	University of Teesside	8
70	Coventry University	37	92	University of Luton	8
71	University of Paisley	36	94	Thames Valley University	7

A total of 94 institutions had some publications. In first place is the London School of Economics with 1,863 articles. Second is the University of Oxford and third is the University of Cambridge, The University of York is in fourth place, followed by the University of Warwick in fifth place and University College London is sixth.

Several of the 'new' universities, for example, Portsmouth, Manchester Metropolitan, London Guildhall, East London, Sheffield Hallam, South Bank, Staffordshire, Middlesex and the West of England, which ranked 46, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 55, 56 and 57 respectively, outperformed some older institutions.

### 3. THE LEAGUE TABLE FOR ARTICLES IN CORE JOURNALS

Some journals are regarded as more prestigious than others. A widely used list of core journals is that of Diamond (1989). Table 2 reports rankings based on publications on the Diamond list<sup>2</sup>. It is interesting to compare Table 2 with Table 1, because there is some shuffling of the order at the top. The London School of Economics tops Table 2 as well as Table 1. The LSE has 293 core publications, York has 173, Oxford 169, University College London has 145, Cambridge has 125. Essex with 109 outperforms Warwick with 108. Many institutions in the tail end of Table 2 disappear as Table 2 contains only 56 institutions included compared to 94 in Table 1.

Eleven new universities fought their way into Table 2. In order these are: Portsmouth, Manchester Metropolitan, Sheffield Hallam, East London, Middlesex, London Guildhall, South Bank, Kingston, Staffordshire, West of England, Nottingham Trent, Hertfordshire and Coventry.

**Table 2: League Table Based on Articles in Core Journals**

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Articles</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Articles</i>
1	London School of Economics	293	32	University of Aberdeen	13
2	University of York	173	32	University of St. Andrews	13
3	University of Oxford	169	34	University of Bath	12
4	University College London	145	34	University of Surrey	12
5	University of Cambridge	125	34	Brunel University	12
6	University of Essex	109	37	University of Leeds	11
7	University of Warwick	108	38	Loughborough University	10
8	London Business School	85	38	Royal Holloway and Bedford New Coll.	10
9	University of Southampton	76	40	University of Sheffield	8
10	University of Nottingham	71	41	Heriot-Watt University	7
11	University of Exeter	62	41	Imperial College of Science & Tech.	7
12	University of Bristol	56	43	University of Durham	6
13	Univ. Newcastle upon Tyne	42	43	Queen's University, Belfast	6
14	University of Birmingham	39	43	University of Ulster	6
15	University of Manchester	37	46	University of Portsmouth	5
16	Queen Mary and Westfield Coll.	31	46	Manchester Metropolitan University	5
17	University of Reading	28	46	Sheffield Hallam University	5
18	City University	27	49	University of Bradford	4
19	University of Glasgow	26	49	University of East London	4
19	University of Edinburgh	26	49	Middlesex University	4
19	University of Leicester	26	52	University of Salford	3
22	University of East Anglia	25	52	London Guildhall University	3
23	University of Strathclyde	24	52	South Bank University	3
23	University of Kent at Canterbury	24	55	Kingston University	2
25	University of Wales	23	56	UMIST	1
26	Keele University	22	56	Staffordshire University	1
27	University of Stirling	18	56	Univ. West of England, Bristol	1
28	University of Sussex	17	56	King's College London	1
28	University of Hull	17	56	De Montfort University	1
30	Lancaster University	16	56	Nottingham Trent University	1
31	University of Liverpool	15	56	University of Hertfordshire	1
31	University of Dundee	15	56	Coventry University	1

4. A WEIGHTED LEAGUE TABLE

Table 3 gives the rankings when all articles are included but core articles are weighted more heavily than other articles. The weighing scheme used was core journal weighted 1.5 and other articles weighted 1.0<sup>3</sup>.

Again LSE heads the league. Oxford is the runner up, Cambridge third, York fourth, University College London fifth, Warwick sixth, Wales seventh, Manchester eighth and Sussex is in ninth place, followed by Nottingham, Newcastle, Reading, Birmingham and the London Business School.

As in Tables 1 and 2 several new universities outperformed older institutions. These new universities include Portsmouth, Manchester Metropolitan, London Guildhall, East London, Sheffield Hallam, South Bank, Staffordshire, Middlesex, the West of England, Kingston, Nottingham Trent, Hertfordshire, Glasgow Caledonian, Liverpool John Moores, Coventry, Paisley, Westminster, Plymouth and Oxford Brookes.

**Table 3: League table based on weighted core, 1.5 and other articles 1.0**

<i>Weighted rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Weighted rating</i>	<i>Weighted rank</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Weighted rating</i>
1	London School of Economics	2009.5	25	University of Edinburgh	318
2	University of Oxford	1644.5	25	Loughborough University	318
3	University of Cambridge	1518.5	27	University of Sheffield	304
4	University of York	1264.5	28	University of Leicester	277
5	University College London	994.5	29	University of Liverpool	276.5
6	University of Warwick	994	30	University of Durham	255
7	University of Wales	791.5	31	Univ. Kent at Canterbury	253
8	University of Manchester	786.5	32	University of Aberdeen	247.5
9	University of Sussex	743.5	33	University of Stirling	230
10	University of Nottingham	724.5	34	University of Bradford	227
11	Univ. Newcastle upon Tyne	637	35	University of Bath	224
12	University of Reading	589	36	Queen Mary and Westfield Coll.	217.5
13	University of Birmingham	578.5	37	Heriot-Watt University	212.5
14	London Business School	570.5	38	Queen's University, Belfast	211
15	University of Essex	460.5	39	University of Surrey	208
16	University of Glasgow	424	40	Keele University	205
17	University of Southampton	420	41	University of Hull	187.5
18	University of Leeds	418.5	42	University of St. Andrews	180.5
19	University of Strathclyde	413	43	University of Ulster	177
20	University of East Anglia	404.5	44	University of Dundee	164.5
21	City University	397.5	45	Brunel University	152
22	Lancaster University	385	46	University of Portsmouth	146.5
23	University of Bristol	368	47	Imperial Coll. of Science & Tech.	143.5
24	University of Exeter	341	48	Manchester Metropolitan Univ.	141.5

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49 London Guildhall University	132.5	72 University of Westminster	31
50 University of East London	126	73 University of Plymouth	30
51 University of Salford	122.5	74 Oxford Brookes University	27
52 UMIST	96.5	75 University of Sunderland	25
53 Sheffield Hallam University	94.5	76 University of Greenwich	24
54 South Bank University	87.5	76 University of Brighton	24
55 Staffordshire University	82.5	78 University of Central Lancashire	23
56 Middlesex University	75	79 The Robert Gordon University	20
57 Royal Holloway & Bedford New Coll.	73	80 University of North London	16
58 Univ. West of England, Bristol	71.5	81 Anglia Polytechnic University	15
59 King's College London	67.5	81 Univ. Central England, Birmingham	15
60 De Montfort University	63.5	81 University of Abertay Dundee	15
61 Aston University	57	84 University of Huddersfield	14
62 Leeds Metropolitan University	53	85 Univ. Lincolnshire and Humberside	13
63 Kingston University	51	86 Goldsmiths College	12
63 SOAS	51	86 University of Wolverhampton	12
65 Nottingham Trent University	49.5	88 University of Glamorgan	11
66 Univ. Northumbria at Newcastle	47	88 Bournemouth University	11
67 University of Hertfordshire	43.5	90 University of Derby	10
68 Glasgow Caledonian University	43	91 Napier University	9
69 Liverpool John Moores Univ.	39	92 University of Teesside	8
70 Coventry University	37.5	92 University of Luton	8
71 University of Paisley	36	94 Thames Valley University	7

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## 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Some general statements can be made from an inspection of the top ranking institutions of each table. The London School of Economics comes first in all the tables. Oxford, Cambridge, University College London, York, Warwick and Essex Universities are all persistently highly ranked. Finally, a number of the new universities have stronger publication records than some older institutions.

## ENDNOTES

1. Middlesex University, Business School, The Burroughs, Hendon, London NW4 4BT, e-mail david-johnsmyth@yahoo.com, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts respectively. The authors wish to thank Derek Leslie for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

2. The Diamond list consists of the following Journals: *American Economic Review*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *Econometrica*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Review of*

*Economic Studies, Journal of Financial Economics, Economic Journal, Journal of Monetary Economics, Journal of Economic Theory, Journal of Law and Economics, Journal of Economic Literature, International Economic Review, Journal of Labor Economics, Brooking Patterns on Economic Activity, Journal of Public Economic Letters, Canadian Journal of Economics.* The above list seems rather biased against European Journals. After consulting some fellow economists we added to the list: *Oxford Economic Papers* and the *European Economic Review*. Studies that make use of the Diamond list include: Burton and Phimister (1995), Conroy and Dusansky (1995), Kalaitzidakis Mamuneas and Stengos (1999).

3. This set of weights was used because an econometric analysis of the reputations of economics departments in the US yielded a weight for a publication in a 'top' journal that was 1.5 times the weight of a publication in other journals. See Smyth (1999).

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