Understanding the UK Academic Job Market

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Today

• A bit of history
• UK Higher Education today
• Evaluation and funding
• Recent changes/future outlook
• Keeping up to date
A university is……

‘…..a school of higher learning combining teaching and scholarship and characterized by its corporate autonomy and academic freedom’

Medieval Universities (Studium generale) – late 11th to early 13th Century
‘dreaming spires’

Oxford → Cambridge

Fleeing hostile townsfolk

“Oxbridge”

Ancient, college-based, many traditions and own ways of doing things.
A story of expansion:

- Collegiate universities: “Oxbridge” and Durham
- 15\textsuperscript{th}/16\textsuperscript{th} Centuries
- ‘Redbrick’ or ‘civic’ - 19\textsuperscript{th} Century/Early 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, LSE 1895
- 20 founded in 1960s after Robbins Report
- 66 post-1992 “new” universities, many former polytechnics
- Open University – distance learning

**Current Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):**

- England 130
- Scotland 20
- Wales 13
- Northern Ireland 2
- TOTAL 165
People – UK HE in numbers

**Students**
- 1.8 million undergraduate students
- 0.5 million postgraduate students
- 15% are international students
- HEIs range from less than 4500 students to 40000 students

**Staff**
- 117,000 full time academic
- 60,000 part time academic
- ~193,000 non-academic
Academic career paths

- Pay negotiated nationally
- Jobs advertised on: [www.jobs.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.ac.uk)

**US**

- Academic job market
  - PhD
  - Assistant Professor
    - Tenure-track
    - Professor/Associate Professor

**UK**

- Junior lecturer
  - Teaching fellow
  - Research fellow
  - PhD
  - Lecturer
    - Senior lecturer
    - Professor
    - Promotion
Research Fellowships

• Either work on someone else’s project or get own funding
• Applying for own funding takes a long time, a year or more
• Sources of funding: research councils, Leverhulme Trust, charities……
• Oxbridge college fellowships – prestigious, highly competitive
When thinking about first academic job post-PhD…….

• Do you want to focus on teaching or research or a mixture of both?
• Teaching load – time for research?
• Job security/length of contract
• For fixed term contract positions – what will be your next step at the end of the contract?
• How well do you ‘fit’?
Seeing double?

University of Bath
Bath Spa University

University of Oxford
Oxford Brookes University

University of Sheffield
Sheffield Hallam University

University of Southhampton
Southampton Solent University

University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University

University of Manchester
Manchester Metropolitan University

Anglia Ruskin University
University of Cambridge

www.lse.ac.uk/careers
Russell Group

“Represents 20 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.”

University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool

LSE
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
Queen's University Belfast
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick

Plus:
• Durham
• Exeter
• Queen Mary
• York
to join in Aug 2012
Russell Group

• Represents 12% of HEIs

BUT

• 60% of the UK’s very best (‘world leading’) research in Russell Group universities – RAE 2008

• 67% (over £2.7 billion) of UK universities’ research grant and contract income 2008-09
First degrees

• Applications administered nationally through UCAS
• Usually 3 years in England and Wales
• Scotland has different education system to England and Wales – 4 year degrees, different school exams
• Classification:
  
  First

  2:1 ← Employers often request 2:1 or above

  2:2

  Third
Evaluating Teaching

• Quality Assurance Agency (QAA): external audits
• Assess quality and standards
• Drive improvements
• UK Quality Code for Higher Education launched Dec 2011
• View institution’s reports online at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Pages/institutions-by-region.aspx
Student Surveys and Stats

- National Student Survey
  - Since 2005
  - Feedback from final year undergraduates
- Unistats
  - Review and compare official information about HEIs in UK
  - Run by HEFCE and UCAS
  - Includes results of national student survey
League Tables

- Sunday Times Good University Guide
- The Times Good University Guide
- The Guardian Good University Guide
- Academic Ranking of World Universities
- THES-QS
- Complete University Guide
Sources of University Research Income

Total £5,484m

- HE funding bodies £1,762m
- Research Councils £1,358m
- UK charities (open competitive process) £708m
- UK charities (other) £118m
- UK central Government/local heath and hospital authorities £639m
- UK industry £296m
- Other grants and contracts £603m

Source: Resources of Higher Education Institutions, HESA, 2007/08
# Research Money

## HE Funding Bodies
- HEFCE - England
- HEFCW – Wales
- SFC – Scotland
- DELNI – Northern Ireland

## Research Councils
- ESRC – social sciences
- AHSS – arts and humanities
- EPSRC – engineering and physical sciences
- BBSRC – life sciences
- NERC – natural environment
- MRC – medicine
- STCF – science facilities

Research infrastructure e.g. libraries
Teaching funding

Research Projects – bidding process
Studentships, fellowships, grants

LSE Careers Service

www.lse.ac.uk/careers
Measuring Research

- 1988 – first research assessment exercise (RAE)
- Provide ratings of quality of research in universities and HE colleges in UK
- Results used to decide allocation of funding by HE funding bodies e.g. HEFCE
- 2008 – last RAE
- Replaced by Research Excellence Framework (REF)
Results of 2008 RAE

- Useful for preparing for applications and interviews
- Information on staff, students and funding
- Report on recent changes and strategy under ‘Research Environment and Esteem’

http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/selectHEI.aspx
REF - Overview

- Expert review
- Deadline for submissions 29 Nov 2013
- Results published Dec 2014
- Affects funding allocation 2015-16
- 36 units of assessment
- Affecting departments recruitment of academic staff – increase in run up
REF - Submissions

- HEIs choose units of assessments
- Submission includes: staff, research outputs, impact (case studies), doctoral degrees, environment
- Census date: staff in post 31 Oct 2013, up to 4 outputs per staff member
- Research outputs between 1st Jan 2008 and 31st Dec 2013
- Multiple author papers ok but discouraged to submit one paper twice within same submission
REF – Panel C outputs

• Books, parts of books
• Journal articles
• Physical artefacts e.g. buildings, installations
• Digital artefacts e.g. archives, film
• Temporary artefacts e.g. exhibitions
• Other e.g. research reports, commissioned reports etc
REF - review

• Sub-panel for each of 36 units of assessment
• Made up of experts with additional assessors appointed where needed
• Main focus is expert review, some may take citations into account (economics/econometrics)
• Won’t use impact factors of journals
REF - Results

• Quality profile for each submission covering:
  • Research outputs 65%: originality, significance, rigour
  • Impact 20%: reach, significance
  • Environment 15%: vitality, sustainability
  • Four star, three star, two star, one star unclassified
REF – further information

• [http://www.ref.ac.uk/subguide/](http://www.ref.ac.uk/subguide/)

• Download
  – ‘Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012)’
Recent Changes

• From Sept 2012 Key Information Sets (KIS) i.e. data on courses, must be published on course webpages of department, including student feedback and destinations
• Changes to funding/regulation from White Paper published June 2011
• Teaching funding from student loans rather than through grants from HEFCE, from 2012/13
• Increased tuition fees
• HEFCE to have greater role in regulation
Keeping Up to Date

- Times Higher Education Supplement THES
- Guardian Education
- HEFCE e-newsletters
Further Reading

- Unistats website – run by HEFCE and UCAS, includes results of National Student Surveys
- HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency (have to pay for reports)
- RAE 2008: [http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/selectHEI.aspx](http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/selectHEI.aspx)
- REF: [http://www.ref.ac.uk/subguide/](http://www.ref.ac.uk/subguide/), ‘Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012)’
- British Council, Resources for International Students studying in the UK: [http://www.britishcouncil.org/higher-education/resources-students](http://www.britishcouncil.org/higher-education/resources-students)
Further Support

• One-to-one appointments with Dr. Madelaine Chapman.
  Book: [http://careers.lse.ac.uk/](http://careers.lse.ac.uk/)
  Email: careers@lse.ac.uk

• Careers Seminars for PhD students every term
  [https://careers.lse.ac.uk/service/home.html](https://careers.lse.ac.uk/service/home.html)

• PhD section on Careers website
  [https://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/CareersAndVacancies/careersService/internal/InformationCurrentStudents/PhDNew/Home.aspx](https://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/CareersAndVacancies/careersService/internal/InformationCurrentStudents/PhDNew/Home.aspx)

• Academic and Professional Development Programme (PhDs)
  [http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/divisionsAndDepartments/TLC/TLCPhD/pdf/APDPPhDprogramme2010-11.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/divisionsAndDepartments/TLC/TLCPhD/pdf/APDPPhDprogramme2010-11.pdf)