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This is the first **Lloyds Bank University Quality of Student Life Survey**. The survey covers 91 institutions where comparable data is available. Data has been gathered from a number of sources, including the HEFCE, HESA, Times Higher Education Supplement, the Beer and Pub Association, British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) and the Complete University guide.

Durham Students top of the pile in first University Quality of Student Life Survey

With students returning to university after the summer break, the first **University Quality of Student Life Survey by Lloyds Bank** has found that **students at Durham University have the best quality of life**. The survey aims to quantify where student satisfaction and living standards are highest by ranking individual institutions' performance across a range of indicators.

Durham University comes top by scoring consistently high in several categories:

- Nine out of ten students are satisfied with their course, higher than the national average (85%)
- 92% of final year graduates find employment (or carry on studying), with an annual full time median salary of £22,000
- Durham holds some of the best sporting facilities amongst British universities, with Durham's sports clubs coming in at number two in the BUCs Overall Championship in 2012/13
- Durham students rate their social life as one of the best in Britain, while living with the lowest crime rate in university towns
- However, being a student in this historic city comes at a cost with some of the most expensive accommodation (both university owned, sponsored and private rentals) amongst British universities

In second place is Loughborough University. Set in Leicestershire, this university scores heavily on sporting excellence. A total of 88% of students are satisfied with their course, while over 92% find employment or another course after graduating as well as students reporting high levels of satisfaction with their social life and value for money shops, bars and other amenities. Loughborough students also live in an area with a relatively low crime rate and on a night out, they have close to 100 bars and pubs to choose from.

Nitesh Patel, economist at Lloyds Bank, comments:

"Taking a wide range of indicators into account, students at Durham University enjoy the best quality of student life. Durham students are satisfied with the quality of their course, which appears to provide them with excellent employment prospects, but they also rate their social life highly and live in a low crime environment. On the downside, accommodation costs are on the high side.



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"The top ten universities for the best quality of student life are a mix of the old, such as Oxford and Cambridge, and the relatively new such as Newcastle and Bath. They all score well on course satisfaction, good employment prospects and high salaries. Many of them are also rated highly for a good social life, particularly in the provincial cities in the north."

Top ten – a mixture of the old and the new

The top ten institutions with the best quality of life are a mix of the ancient universities of Cambridge (3rd place) and Oxford (5th) and those in the major provincial cities of Newcastle (4th), Nottingham (7th), Manchester (8th) and Sheffield (9th). The universities of Bath (6th) and Swansea (10th) make up the remaining two spots in the top ten. (See Table 1)

Most of these universities score strongly with final year undergraduates being satisfied with the quality of their course and an average of 93% finding employment (or another course) on completion. Many of them earn relatively high salaries. For example, Cambridge graduates earn a median salary of £25,800 followed by those from Oxford (£24,800). Many of these institutions have excellent sporting facilities as measured by their position in the BUCS Overall Championship. Students at the universities of Newcastle and Sheffield are the happiest with their social life and the city of Manchester has almost 250 pubs to choose from – the highest amongst university towns.

Students of Swansea University and the University of Northumbria (11th in the ranking) not only have an excellent quality of life but living does not come at a high cost with the least expensive university owned or sponsored accommodation in Britain.

KEY FACTS

Satisfaction with the university experience

University of Bath was rated as providing the most **satisfactory university experience** with 94% of final year students satisfied with the quality of the course¹; significantly above the national average of 85%. Bath finished narrowly ahead of a group of universities ranging between 90% and 93% in this year's National Student Survey, including the universities of East Anglia, Exeter, Keele, Cambridge and Oxford.

Student accommodation costs

In 2012/13 students at the University of Northumbria had the **cheapest institution owned or sponsored accommodation**², paying an average £1,500 per academic year; followed by the universities of Swansea (£2,500), Teeside (£2,800) and Staffordshire (£2,900).



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The five universities with the most expensive university owned or sponsored accommodation are all in London; with the average annual cost ranging from £5,900 at University College to £8,250 at City University.

Undergraduates at Swansea University had the **least expensive rooms in private rentals**³ with an average annual cost of £2,550; followed by the universities of Staffordshire (£2,300), Salford and Cumbria (both £2,550). The most expensive private rooms are occupied by students at the London School of Economics (£7,000).

Employment and Earnings

96.2% leavers from Glasgow Caledonian University from the academic year 2011/12 indicated they were working or studying⁴ – the highest in Britain and above than the national average of 90.3%. Glasgow Caledonian is closely followed by Derby (96.1%), Newcastle (95.2%), Cardiff Metropolitan (95%) and Cambridge (94.9%).

The highest full time salaries are earned by students from the London School of Economics (LSE) where graduates reported a median salary (after 6 months in employment) of £27,388⁵ in 2012. The earning power of LSE students is followed by those from Cambridge (£25,800), King's College, London (£25,770) and Oxford (£24,800).

Sports

The **quality of sports facilities** is measured indirectly by where the university ranked in the British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) Overall championship⁶ in 2012/13; the higher the ranking the better the facilities are assumed to be. Loughborough University had the highest number of points, followed by Durham, Birmingham, Bath and Exeter.

Social Life

The **University of Newcastle and University of Sheffield came out joint top for the best social life**⁷ in a survey on student experience. These two northern universities are followed by the universities of Leeds, Cardiff Metropolitan and Loughborough.

Also in the same survey, **students at Cardiff Metropolitan and Dundee University had access to the cheapest shops, bars and other amenities**⁸.

However, **students in the city of Manchester (covering University of Manchester, Metropolitan and UMIST) had 245 pubs and bars**⁹ to choose from on a night out – the highest in any of the university towns in the survey.

Crime



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The area around Durham University has a crime rate (burglary, robbery and violence) of 0.88 per 1,000 residents¹⁰ – the lowest amongst university towns. Durham is followed by the University of Chester (0.99 per 1,000 residents) and the University of Hertfordshire (1.02 per 1,000).

Table 1: Lloyds Bank University Quality of Life Rankings – the top 30 Universities 2013

University	Town/City	Ranking 2013
University of Durham	Durham	1
Loughborough University	Loughborough	2
University of Cambridge	Cambridge	3
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	Newcastle	4
University of Oxford	Oxford	5
University of Bath	Bath	6
University of Nottingham	Nottingham	7
University of Manchester	Manchester	8
University of Sheffield	Sheffield	9
Swansea University	Swansea	10
University of Northumbria	Newcastle	11
University of Leeds	Leeds	12
University of Birmingham	Birmingham	13
University of Exeter	Exeter	14
University of Warwick	Coventry	15
University of Bristol	Bristol	16
Keele University	Keele	17
University of East Anglia	Norwich	18
Lancaster University	Lancaster	19
University of Southampton	Southampton	20
Cardiff Metropolitan University	Cardiff	21
University of Reading	Reading	22
University of Liverpool	Liverpool	23
Sheffield Hallam University	Sheffield	24
University of York	York	25
University of Chester	Chester	26
Leeds Metropolitan University	Leeds	27
University of Kent	Canterbury	28
York St John University	York	29
University of Edinburgh	Edinburgh	30

Table 2: University with the Best Quality of Life in each category

Variable	University	Town/City
% of students satisfied with their course (94%)	Bath	Bath
Least expensive institution owned or sponsored accommodation (average £1,500 per academic year)	Northumbria	Newcastle



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Least expensive private rental rooms (average £2,350 per academic year)	Swansea	Swansea
% of students indicating they are working (or in further studies) 96.2%	Glasgow Caledonian	Glasgow
Median full time earnings £27,388 (after six months)	London School of Economics	London
Sports facilities – BUCS score (5,348 points)	Loughborough	Loughborough
Good social life (survey score 6.4 out of 7)	Newcastle and Sheffield	Newcastle and Sheffield
Cheap shops, bars and other amenities (survey score 5.8 out of 7)	Cardiff Metropolitan and Dundee	Cardiff and Dundee
Number of pubs/bars in the city - 245	Manchester	Manchester
Crime rate per 1,000 residents – 0.88	Durham	Durham

Ends

Notes to editors:

The survey aims to quantify where student satisfaction and living standards are highest by ranking individual institutions' performance across a range of indicators covering the course quality, employment and earnings potential, accommodation cost, sports facilities, social life and crime. The survey covers 91 universities where consistent data is available.

¹National Student Survey 2013 Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The % of respondents who 'definitely' or 'mostly' agreed they were satisfied with the quality of their course. Figures are based on institutions where the majority of teaching is done.

²Student accommodation costs from HEFCE. Lloyds Bank estimate on the mid-point between the upper and lower quartile annual cost of institution owned/sponsored beds for 2012/13.

³Student accommodation costs from HEFCE. Lloyds Bank estimate on the mid-point between the upper and lower quartile annual cost of private sector beds for 2012/13.

⁴Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA 2011/12; leavers with first degree indicating they are working (or in further study) as a percentage of all those who are working or studying or seeking work. Respondents can be in full or part time employment/further study, self employed, in voluntary unpaid work or starting work within the month.

⁵HEFCE 2012 Salary survey data from registering institutions. Salary information relates to those in full-time employment (after 6 months). Median salary estimates by Lloyds Bank.

⁶British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) is responsible for organising 50 inter-university sports with a membership of 162 universities and colleges in the UK. It coordinates competitions and leagues for the 2.5 million students attending university. BUCS awards points in all its competitions towards the 'BUCS Overall Championship' - a ranking of member universities' sporting achievements. BUCS ranking is used as a proxy for sporting facilities; i.e. the higher the ranking, the better are the facilities available to students assumed to be.

⁷ and ⁸ Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2013. The survey was based on the views of 12,000 students across the country, taken between October 2011 and July 2012.



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Participants were asked to rate their institution, based on a seven-point scale, against 21 criteria, including good social life and cheap shops, bars and other amenities.

⁹ Beer and Pub Association 2012. Number of pubs is a Lloyds Bank estimate derived from data at Parliamentary Constituency level. Figures cover the wider area of the town/city.

¹⁰ The Complete University Guide on crime rates. The tables list the annual reported incidents per thousand residents, June 2011–May 2012, within wards or electoral divisions of which parts are within 3 miles of the main campus.

The British University Quality of Life index aims to quantify where student satisfaction and living standards are highest in Britain by ranking individual institutions' performance across a range of indicators covering the course quality, employment and earnings potential, accommodation cost, sports facilities, social life and crime. The index has been produced at a university level covering 91 institutions where consistent data is available. This survey does not take account of tuition fees and other course related costs (such as books, stationary and technical equipment).

The quality of life reading for each university has been created by summing scores across 10 variables within 6 broad groups.

Each university is given a score out of 10 for each variable contained in the index. Scores within each of the broad groups are averaged and then the six group scores are summed to create an overall quality of life score.