

Durham University league table performance

League tables provide an assessment of our standing in relation to other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and are used by applicants and the wider community to judge performance.

The presentation of league table results has been revised from the previous year to align with other publications and to reflect that the rankings, while published in one year (e.g.2022), are held by the institution for the following year (e.g. 2023).

| League Table | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|--|--------|---------|---------|
| Complete University Guide | 6th | 6th | 7th |
| The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide | 6th | 6th | 6th |
| The Guardian | 6th | 5th | 4th |
| Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings | 92nd | 82nd | 86th |
| Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings | =198th | =162nd | =149th |
| Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings | n/a* | 101-200 | 87th |
| Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) | n/a* | 301-400 | 301-400 |

*These rankings will be published during 2023..

Sustainable development goals

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a blueprint to achieve a more sustainable future by encouraging organisations and individuals to address global challenges. We have mapped the SDGs onto our research, teaching, wider student experience and global activities. We will use this information to assess our impact, identify gaps and consider where to focus efforts to deliver an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable institution and help to balance social, economic and environmental sustainability for the world. This includes building the SDGs into our education offer, with programmes in climate science, sustainability, energy and development, and environmental geoscience. Throughout this report we highlight examples where our work is contributing towards these goals. Further information is published on the University website.

During 2022/23 we will be developing our Net-Zero and Biodiversity Strategies which will help to improve our performance against SDG13 Climate Action and SDG15 Life on Land. These strategies should promote our position in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, which last year assessed 1,400 universities worldwide against the SDGs.

United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals





Governance

Framework

Durham University was founded in 1832 by an Act of Parliament. Its legal status derives from a Royal Charter dated 1837 and the Universities of Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne Act 1963 when King's College became the independent University of Newcastle. It is also a charity exempt from registration under Schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011. It is regulated by the Office for Students (OfS) and was approved as a registered provider of higher education by the OfS in September 2018.

The University's objects, powers and framework of governance are set out in its Charter and Statutes, the latest version of which were approved by Privy Council in July 2011. Members of Council and Senate, including Durham Students' Union and with the support of external legal advisers, have recently undertaken a review of the Statutes. The review aims to ensure the University's governance structures remain fit for purpose. The revised Statutes will be presented for approval to Senate, Council and the Privy Council during 2022/23.

The University receives the majority of its income from student fees and competitively won grants with a small proportion from public sources. The terms and conditions for receipt of public funds are established in guidance produced by the OfS.

As a charity, the University must operate for the public benefit. In setting and reviewing the University's strategic objectives the University governing body, Council, acts in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. In its fundraising activities, the University adheres to the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

The University conducts its business in a fair, proper, transparent and ethical manner; in accordance with the seven principles identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life; with the Higher Education Code of Governance issued by the CUC; and is respectful of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) UK Corporate Governance Code.

The University complies with the six primary elements of the Higher Education Code of Governance. Council members have expressed support for appointing a Senior Independent Governor and requested Governance and Nominations Committee to consider this appointment alongside the Vice-Chair role.

The University's governance and management system:

- Ensures there is proper governance of the University and management is supported to deliver the University Strategy
- Reflects good practice in higher education and other relevant sectors
- Ensures proper checks, balances and transparency in decision-making to provide appropriate assurance to funders and stakeholders
- Supports the management of risks while maximising value for money
- Safeguards the long-term interests and sustainability of the institution.



The University's governance framework and management arrangements, aim to support delivery of the University Strategy 2017-27 and be responsive to the dynamic external operating environment. The effectiveness of the governance and management arrangements is regularly evaluated through periodic internal and external reviews. An external review of Council is conducted every few years in line with the guidance in the CUC Code of Governance. The most recent review was conducted in 2021 and the report presented to Council, with the Executive Summary published on the University website. An external review of Senate was undertaken following the Council review and a report presented to Senate and Council in October 2022. The Governance and Nominations Committee is overseeing implementation of the action plans in relation to the recommendations in both reports.

Management

The principal academic, administrative and Accountable Officer of the University is the Vice-Chancellor, who is responsible to Council for the overall strategic direction and performance of the University, and as Warden has overall responsibility for Durham's colleges. The Vice-Chancellor and Warden is supported by a senior leadership team.

The University Secretary is responsible for the University's overall governance, assurance and legal compliance and reports directly to the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the University's Financial Strategy, including financial planning and reporting, treasury investment, procurement, and value for money.

Governance committees

Council is the governing body and Trustee Board of the University with overall responsibility for its affairs and sustainability.

Council is responsible for setting the strategic vision and values of the University, for the organisation of teaching and research and control of the University's property and finances.

Council ensures the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability, including financial and operating controls, risk assessment, value for money and other regulatory responsibilities including compliance with the OfS's ongoing conditions of registration and terms and conditions of funding.

Joe Docherty is the Chair of Council. Joe is Managing Director of Bede Homes, Sedgefield and a Trustee of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, which funds the charitable work of organisations focusing on the Arts, Children and Young People, the Environment and Social Change.

Members of Council include: thirteen lay members, including the Chair, drawn from outside the University; seven appointed members of University staff; and ex-officio members that include the Vice-Chancellor and Warden, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, Dean of Durham Cathedral and President of Durham Student's Union. The Council's gender balance during 2021/22 (following the arrival of the new Vice-Chancellor) was 48% male to 52% female.

Lay members do not receive payment for their work on Council or its Committees but may claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses that are disclosed in the financial statements. A Register of Interests of all Council members is retained by the University Secretary to help manage conflicts of interest.

The appointment process for members of Council is overseen by the Governance and Nominations Committee, which ensures there is an appropriate mix of skills and experience to enable Council to fulfil its responsibilities. A skills register of Council members is maintained by the University Secretary. Lay member vacancies are advertised externally and independent search companies are used to help widen the pool and diversity of candidates. Staff member vacancies are advertised widely within the University.

An induction programme is provided to new Council members and members receive ongoing development training through presentations to Council on topical issues and from external providers such as Advance HE.

Lay Council members are encouraged to be involved in other aspects of University life to cultivate a wider understanding of the University and engage with stakeholders. This includes such activities as reviewing student academic appeals, joining recruitment panels for senior posts and attendance at Convocation (meetings with alumni), and graduation ceremonies. Dedicated events to enable Council members to meet students and staff were also held during the year.

During 2021/22 Council met on ten occasions. This included Council's annual Strategy Day and annual joint meeting with Senate. The confirmed minutes of meetings are published on the University website. Members considered a range of key items during the year.

Progress updates on the University's Strategy, including plans from the Executive to refresh the Strategy as the University transitions into the second half of the ten-year period.

Council monitored the University's financial condition including review and approval of the annual financial statements; investment in the digital domain; and long-term capital spend on the University's estate that includes the proposed acquisition of two properties – Boldon House and The Sands. Council also approved an updated financial agreement and memorandum of understanding with the Recognised Colleges and received regular reports from its committees regarding the oversight of pensions, investments and targeted philanthropic and fundraising activities.

Council received reports on key staffing matters, remuneration and diversity pay and the Staff Survey outcomes. Members supported the launch of an Inclusive Culture and Leadership Development Programme and was involved in the recruitment and appointment of the University's first Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

On the recommendation of Senate, Council approved the establishment of separate Economics and Finance Departments within the University's Business School and proposed mitigations on deferrals for the 2021 admissions cycle. Senate also provided an analysis and response to the 2021 National Student Survey.

The Durham Students' Union President and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Colleges and Student Experience presented regular updates and Council approved various student-related policies and procedures.

Council received the report following a review of its own effectiveness and thereafter received regular updates from the Governance and Nominations Committee regarding the action plan to address the proposed recommendations and suggestions. Council approved an effectiveness review be undertaken of the Senate and received regular updates from the joint Council and Senate steering group overseeing the process.

Following the strategic review to modernise, simplify and update the University's Statutes, Council approved submission of proposed changes to the Privy Council.

Statement of the Council's Primary Responsibilities



1. To set and agree the mission, strategic vision and values of the University.
2. To agree long term academic and business plans and key performance indicators and ensure that these meet the interests of stakeholders, especially staff, students and alumni.
3. Subject to the powers of the Senate, to be responsible for the organisation of teaching and research, including the organisation of Faculties, Boards of Studies and other groupings, the appointments of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Heads of Departments (Chairs of Boards of Studies), and the prescription of the dates when the Michaelmas, Epiphany and Easter Terms begin and end.
4. To appoint the Vice-Chancellor as Chief Executive of the University and Accountable Officer, and to put in place suitable arrangements for monitoring his/her performance. The Council is responsible for the removal of the Vice-Chancellor for good cause.
5. To delegate authority to the Vice-Chancellor, as Chief Executive, for the effective academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University.
6. To establish and keep under regular review the policies, procedures and limits within such management functions as shall be undertaken by and under the authority of the Vice-Chancellor.
7. To ensure the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability, including financial and operational controls, risk assessment, value for money arrangements and procedures for handling internal grievances and for managing conflicts of interest. Council is responsible for the appointment of the University's external auditors.
8. To ensure processes are in place to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the University against the strategy, plans and approved key performance indicators, which should be, where possible and appropriate, benchmarked against other comparable institutions.
9. To establish processes to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the governing body itself and the University's system of governance.
10. To conduct its business in accordance with best practice in higher education corporate governance and with the principles of public life drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.
11. To safeguard the good name and values of the University and to be responsible for the ethical governance of the University.
12. To appoint the University Secretary as Secretary to Council.
13. To be the employing authority for all staff in the University and in the maintained Colleges and Societies and to be responsible for establishing a human resources strategy and, subject to the powers of the Senate, for the maintenance of discipline.

14. To be the principal financial and business authority of the University including:
 - a) ensuring that proper books of account are kept; approving the annual budget, financial statements and financial forecasts; establishing budget centres within the University for the efficient management of resources and appointing Budget Officers for each budget centre; the approval of fees
 - b) having overall responsibility for the University's assets, property and estate.
15. To ensure that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to ensure public funds are managed appropriately, in line with the conditions of grant and the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, and to protect the interests of taxpayers and other stakeholders, including providing transparency about value for money for students and for taxpayers.
16. To be the University's legal authority and, as such, to ensure that systems are in place for meeting all the University's legal obligations, including those arising from contracts and other legal commitments made in the University's name. This includes accountability for health, safety and security and for equality, diversity and inclusion. Council is responsible for making regulations for the custody and use of the common seal of the University and for representing the University in all negotiations for obtaining grants from public bodies in aid of the work of the University.
17. To act as trustee for any property, legacy, endowment, bequest or gift in support of the work and welfare of the University.
18. To promote a culture which supports inclusivity and diversity across the institution.
19. To maintain and protect the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech legislation.
20. To receive and test assurance that academic governance overseen by Senate is adequate and effective.
21. To ensure that all students have opportunities to engage with the governance of the University and that this allows for a range of perspectives to have influence.
22. To receive assurance that adequate provision has been made for the general welfare of students. Subject to the powers of the Senate, to be responsible for the regulation of the relations between the Council and the students, and for the maintenance of student discipline.
23. Subject to the provisions of the Statutes, to be responsible for the recognition of the recognised Colleges of the University. In particular, University Council shall approve the appointment of the Heads of the Recognised Colleges.
24. To approve changes to Statutes and to ensure that the University's constitution is followed at all times and that appropriate advice is available to enable this to happen.

Responsibilities of Council in the preparation of the Financial Statements

The Council is responsible for the administration and management of the affairs of the University and is required to present audited financial statements for each financial year.

Council is responsible for ensuring that proper accounting records are kept which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the University and which enable Council to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accounting instructions from the OfS, the University's Statutes, the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting for further and higher education and other relevant accounting standards. In addition, Council through its Accountable Officer is required by the OfS to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the University's state of affairs and of the surplus or deficit and cash flows for that year.

In the preparation of the financial statements and in accordance with the exercise of its powers under the statutes, Council is responsible for ensuring:

- Suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently
- Judgements and estimates which are made are reasonable and prudent
- Applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- The University has adequate resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future. For this reason, the going concern basis continues to be adopted in the preparation of the financial statements.

Council has taken reasonable steps to:

- Ensure funds from the OfS are used only for the purposes for which they have been given and in accordance with OfS guidance and the University's ongoing conditions of registration
- Ensure funds from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) are used only for the purposes for which they have been given and in accordance with the agreement between the NCTL and the University and any other conditions, which the NCTL may from time to time impose
- Ensure there are appropriate financial and management controls in place to safeguard public funds and funds from other sources
- Safeguard the assets of the University and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities
- Secure the economical, efficient and effective management of the University's resources and expenditure.

In so far as the Council is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware
- The Council has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Council membership and meeting attendance record 2021/22

| Members | Meetings attended | | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--|------------------|
| | Council | Audit and Risk Committee | Finance Committee | Governance and Nominations Committee | Remuneration Committee | University Strategy Implementation Committee | Ethics Committee |
| Ex-officio members | | | | | | | |
| Sir Thomas Allen | The Chancellor | n/a | | | | | |
| Professor Karen O'Brien (from January 2022) | Vice-Chancellor | 5/5 | 3/3 | 4/4 | 3/3 | 2/2 | |
| Professor Antony Long | Deputy Vice-Chancellor | 8/8 | 2/2 | 7/7 | 2/2 | 3/3 | |
| The Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett | Dean of Durham | 5/8 | 3/5 | | | | 3/3 |
| Ms Seun Twins | President of Durham Students' Union | 8/8 | | 6/7 | 3/5 | 0/3 | 1/3 |
| Lay members | | | | | | | |
| Mrs Joanna Barker (Vice-Chair) | | 8/8 | | 7/7 | | | |
| Mr Jonathan Bewes | | 7/8 | | 5/7 | | 3/3 | |
| Ms Kay Boycott | | 8/8 | 5/5 | | | | |
| Mr Joe Docherty (Chair) | | 8/8 | | 6/7 | 5/5 | 2/3 | |
| Miss Leslie Ferrar | | 7/8 | 4/5 | | | | |
| Mr James Grierson | | 6/8 | | 6/7 | | 3/3 | |
| Mrs Alison Hastings | | 6/8 | | | 5/5 | 3/3 | |
| Professor Denise Lievesley | | 7/8 | | | | | |
| Ms Cheryl Millington | | 7/8 | 4/5 | | | | |
| Mr Nigel Perry | | 8/8 | | | | 3/3 | 2/3 |
| Dr Kate Pretty | | 8/8 | 5/5 | | | 3/3 | 3/3 |
| Mr Terry Toney | | 8/8 | | | 5/5 | 3/3 | |
| Appointed members of University staff | | | | | | | |
| Dr Camila Caiado | | 8/8 | | | 5/5 | | |
| Professor Colin Macpherson | | 5/8 | | 4/7 | | | |
| Dr Amir Michael | | 7/8 | | 6/7 | | | |
| Ms Rebecca Morris | | 8/8 | | | | | |
| Dr Liadi Mudashiru | | 7/8 | | | | | |
| Professor Ari Sadanandom | | 7/8 | | | | | |
| Professor Corinne Saunders | | 8/8 | | | | | |

Declan Merrington, Postgraduate Academic Officer, Durham Students' Union was invited to meetings as an attendee during 2021/22. The University Secretary and Chief Financial Officer are standing attendees of Council meetings.

The work of Council is supported by several committees which exercise delegated authority in accordance with terms of reference approved by Council and whose decisions and recommendations are formally reported to Council.

Senate provides assurance to Council on academic quality and standards. Senate is responsible for promoting, directing and regulating teaching and research, key components of the business model. Senate is supported by the Education, Research, and Wider Student Experience Committees. Senate membership is drawn from across University staff plus representatives from Durham Students' Union and is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. A review of the effectiveness of Senate commenced in 2022 overseen by a Joint Steering Group of Senate and Council. The review was undertaken by the independent organisation that conducted the review of Council.

Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for providing assurance to Council on the adequacy of the University's arrangements for risk management, control and governance; economy, efficiency and effectiveness; and the management and quality assurance of data submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the Student Loans Company, the OfS, Research England, and other bodies. The Committee advises Council on the appointment and performance of the internal and external auditors, agrees the audit programme, and sets the policy on the use of auditors for non-audit work. Any incidents that may affect the performance of the University are reported to the Committee, which ensures management takes appropriate action to mitigate risks.

The Committee considers elements of the annual financial statements including the auditors' formal opinion, the statement of members' responsibilities, corporate governance statement and internal control, and risk management statements. No significant issues were identified in relation to the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2022.

The University has a hybrid internal audit function. An in-house service is supported by bought-in generalist internal audit service, provided by Uniac, and specialist support for information technology and health and safety audits provided by PwC and British Safety Council respectively. The external and internal auditors are appointed by Council, on the recommendation of Audit and Risk Committee. There was no change in audit providers during 2021/22.

| Audit and Risk Committee membership 2021/22 | |
|---|--|
| Lay members | |
| Ms Kay Boycott (<i>Chair</i>) | |
| Ms Cheryl Millington | |
| Dr Kate Pretty | |
| The Venerable Andrew Tremlett | |
| Additional Lay member of Council | |
| Miss Leslie Ferrar | |
| Co-opted members | |
| Mr Martin Cocker | |
| Mr Grant Evans (<i>until November 2021</i>) | |

Finance Committee advises Council on the financial position of the University budgets and financial forecasts. The Committee plays an important role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the institution through advising Council on the use of accounting policies and changes to accounting treatment, approving the University's policies on investment and borrowing, monitoring implementation of the strategy for the Estate and overseeing the University's employee pension arrangements. The Committee also monitors the effective and efficient procurement and use of resources in accordance with the objectives of the University.

| Finance Committee membership 2021/22 | |
|--|--|
| Ex-officio members | |
| Mr Joe Docherty | Chair of Council |
| Professor Karen O'Brien (<i>from January 2022</i>) | Vice-Chancellor |
| Professor Antony Long | Deputy Vice-Chancellor |
| Ms Seun Twins | President of Durham Students' Union |
| Members of Council | |
| Mrs Joanna Barker (<i>Chair</i>) | |
| Mr Jonathan Bewes | |
| Mr James Grierson | |
| Professor Colin Macpherson | |
| Dr Amir Michael | |

Governance and Nominations Committee is responsible for keeping under review and advising Council on the University's governance arrangements and ensuring the University pursues governance good practice and complies with external governance requirements. The Committee reviews the role description for Council members, oversees a systematic and transparent selection process, and makes recommendations to Council for the appointment and succession planning of members for Council and its Committees. The Committee is responsible for ensuring there is an appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and experience to enable Council to fulfil its responsibilities. The Committee reviews annually the Council Register of Interests, develops processes for the periodic

review of Council's effectiveness and oversees the action plan for addressing proposed recommendations and suggestions.

The Committee receives reports on the University's compliance in relation to governance codes and OfS registration and advises Council on these matters.

| Governance and Nominations Committee membership 2021/22 | |
|---|--|
| Ex-officio members | |
| Mr Joe Docherty (<i>Chair</i>) | Chair of Council |
| Professor Antony Long (<i>to December 2021</i>) | Vice-Chancellor |
| Professor Karen O'Brien (<i>from January 2022</i>) | |
| Ms Seun Twins | President of Durham Students' Union |
| Lay Members of Council | |
| Mrs Alison Hastings | |
| Mr Terry Toney | |
| Staff member of Council | |
| Dr Camila Caiado | |
| Senior members of staff | |
| Professor Kiran Fernandes* | |
| Professor Gillian Bentley | |

*excluding the period when serving as the Executive Dean of the Business School.

Remuneration Committee determines the annual remuneration of senior staff (Executive Committee members, University Secretary, Vice-Chancellor, professors and equivalent level senior posts within the Grade 10 pay range) in line with its policy to encourage enhanced performance and reward staff for their contribution to the success of the University in a fair and responsible manner. Decisions take account of market data (UCEA Korn Ferry, CUC and other survey information) as well as the public interest, the safeguarding of public funds, the University's interests and the need to remain competitive. The Committee also approves, cognisant of the use of public funds, any termination arrangements for senior staff. The remuneration of the Vice-Chancellor is determined in the context of the size and turnover of the University, its contribution to the region, nation and internationally and its place within the HE sector and the Russell Group. Note 7 of the Financial Statements provides further details of the remuneration of the Vice-Chancellor and senior staff.

The Committee aligns itself with the CUC Higher Education Senior Staff Remuneration code. The paragraph above sets out the University's current remuneration arrangements in line with the Code.

| Remuneration Committee membership 2021/22 | |
|---|---|
| Ex-officio member | |
| Mr Joe Docherty | Chair of Council |
| Dr Kate Pretty (<i>Chair</i>) | Member of Audit and Risk Committee |
| Lay members of Council | |
| Mr Jonathan Bewes | |
| Mrs Alison Hastings | |
| Mr Nigel Perry | |

University Strategy Implementation Committee provides strategic oversight and scrutiny of progress in implementing the University Strategy 2017-2027 to give assurance to Council.

| University Strategy Implementation Committee membership 2021/22 | |
|---|--|
| Ex-officio members | |
| Professor Antony Long (<i>to December 2021</i>) | Vice-Chancellor |
| Professor Karen O'Brien (<i>from January 2022</i>) | |
| Ms Seun Twins | President of Durham Students' Union |
| Members of Council | |
| Dr Kate Pretty (<i>Chair</i>) | Member of Audit and Risk Committee |
| Mr James Grierson | Member of Finance Committee |
| Mr Nigel Perry | |
| Co-opted member | |
| Mr Terry Toney | |

University Ethics Committee is a joint committee of Senate and Council and chaired by a lay member of Council. The Committee is responsible for fostering an environment in which ethics and integrity are firmly embedded in the University's ethos and culture. The Committee provides advice on the development of institutional policies and guidelines relating to ethical issues arising from research and advises on other ethical issues as requested.

University Executive Committee is a joint committee of Senate and Council and chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. Membership comprises the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Executive Faculty Deans, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Strategic Initiatives Delivery Unit and the Director of Estates and Facilities. The University Secretary and the Director of Advancement and Communications are standing attendees of meetings. The Committee oversees the development and delivery of the University Strategy and monitors the achievement of its performance objectives. The Committee coordinates the University's integrated planning and budgeting process and recommends the annual budget and financial forecasts, manages key risks and makes recommendations to Senate and Council on important policy initiatives.