##

## **Report: HEI Wellness Index, 2022**

Powered by Learning Labs

##

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**Foreword**

Welcome to the Higher Education Institution (HEI) Wellness Index report by Learning Labs, in which we seek to establish the levels of wellbeing support available at universities across the UK. We have collated data from circa 74 institutions and this research aims to present an overview of wellbeing provisions offered by UK universities, both individually and collectively, to gain insight into who the front runners are in supporting student wellness in the UK.

Over the last decade, there has been a 450% rise in students declaring mental health issues on their application form (1), and what is perhaps more concerning is the rising rate of student suicides, increasing from 645 deaths in 2018 to 693 in 2019 (2). These trends clearly show that the student population requires additional support regarding their mental wellbeing.

We found it critical to analyse the factors that have dramatically affected these statistics in recent years. The rising cost of living and the fact that student debt is climbing at 13 per cent per year and is already at an all-time high are two possible reasons why more students are seeking mental health support (3). University is meant to be an exciting time for everyone, but with rising mental and financial strain, this is not always the case. It’s no surprise that current students struggle to cope with mental wellness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a negative impact on the mental health of UK students. 67% of people between 13 and 25 stated that the pandemic would continue to negatively impact their mental health (4), even after the lockdown and restrictions were lifted. Therefore, it is essential to discover what the UK HEIs are doing to best support those experiencing poor mental health. The long-term effects of COVID are not yet known, but it is clear that additional support needs to be put in place.

We would like to thank all universities who participated in the collation of this index.

**A Message from Andy Gough**

eQuality Solutions (eQS) is a group of specialist companies whose purpose is to unlock true potential and improve outcomes for both individuals and organisations by removing barriers in education, employment and life!

In spring 2020, the Learning Labs team started developing a new concept for understanding and managing mental wellness for higher education students. Learning Labs teamed up with New Economic Foundation Consulting (NEF Consulting) to carry out extensive research which resulted in the discovery of a new mental wellbeing concept, the Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM. The aim was to create a digital mental wellness support system within the existing Learning Labs e-learning portal that takes the daunting and intangible subject of mental wellness and makes it easy to understand and manage.

Building on the Six Domains of Mental Wellness™ research, Learning Labs developed the HEI Wellness Index to help understand the current wellbeing landscape and offering across UK universities. This gives us an idea of how the student population is being guided and supported and will help us all to focus on areas we can develop to better support students in higher education with their mental wellbeing. We intend for this to be an annual report to guide us on how we perform across the UK, year on year, within the education sector and to encourage positive change in areas where we have identified there is room for improvement.

I hope you find this report insightful.

Andy Gough

CEO, eQS

**Introduction**

**The Rising Demand for Wellness at Universities**

In 2020, 111,548 students in the UK declared that they were suffering from mental health issues on their university application forms. This was a 4% increase over applications in 2019 (5). Partner this with the rate of student suicides slowly on the rise(6) and the fact that student debt has risen a staggering 13% year on year since 2017(7); it is clear that UK students are in need of wellbeing support.

We must first understand the mental wellbeing concept to know what kind of assistance students need. Simply put, wellbeing is how we are doing as individuals. It is a mental state at a point in time that establishes if we are surviving or thriving, and several factors influence whether we feel mentally happy. Academics and governments define it in various ways. However it is defined, positive Mental Wellness is essential in all aspects of life, especially if you’ve moved cities and are taking advantage of everything that university offers.

At Learning Labs, we believe nurturing and maintaining healthy mental wellness habits are essential to leading a healthy lifestyle. It alters our thoughts and feelings, both emotionally and physically, and can even impact our physical health later in life. A routine may help develop good mental health, so it is crucial to find out what works for the individual.

Balance is essential while going through a period of transition, such as moving to university. In these times, our habits and daily rituals are critical to our sense of control. By focusing on our mental wellness and knowing that others are doing the same, we can achieve a sense of balance and, ultimately, positive mental wellness.

**The Six Domains of Mental Wellness™**

Understanding the vast and, at times, daunting subject of mental wellbeing can be a complex and endless task. However, as an e-learning software provider, Learning Labs is experienced in taking a subject matter and breaking it down into bite-sized learning. This was the approach the Learning Labs team took in researching and developing their concept for understanding mental wellbeing, known as The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM. The idea being that if there are just six different influences on a person’s overall mental wellbeing, this should be much easier to understand, maintain and even develop.

The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM include **Emotional, Motivational, Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual**, and **Social Wellness**, and have become the core basis of the 'Learning Labs Plus’ e-learning content for higher education professionals and students.

Bryony Steventon, Head of Product at Learning Labs, said, “In order to experience a relatively healthy sense of mental wellbeing, every person needs fuel. We need our physical bodies to feel fit and well, and as human beings, it is equally important that we also stimulate our minds; this is known as our intellectual wellness. We need a healthy amount of self-motivation in order to feel competent and autonomous in our day-to-day activities. If we have good physical, intellectual, and motivational wellness, we are better equipped to make plans for the future, to explore our sense of purpose in our spiritual wellness and form and maintain our social connections with other humans. Our social wellness can support us during challenging times, but so can our emotional resilience and balance.

There are many ways the domains are interlinked – so this is just one way of considering them. This concept can be closely linked to a theory known as the Dynamic Model of Wellbeing which is something NEF Consulting looked at in our research phase and details a complex relationship between internal and external environmental factors. However, in creating a tangible solution for students and staff in higher education, we wanted to focus just on the influences a person can control, which is how we developed The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM. The six domains are all influences on mental wellbeing that an individual can learn about, maintain, and develop at their own pace.

Each of the six domains also contains key drivers, breaking down this concept even further into bite-sized learning. For example, if someone wants to develop their **Spiritual Wellness**, they can focus on the key drivers of **self-esteem** and **purpose**.

EQS, the parent company for Learning Labs, commissioned NEF Consulting to carry out a research report defining the supporting evidence for The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM (8).

This HEI Wellness Index report will employthe Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM to determine which universities are paving the way to better student wellbeing.

**Methodology - Freedom of Information Requests (FOI)**

The FOI requests consisted of carefully selected questions to reflect the Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM outlined above. The requests were issued to UK universities targeting each of the six areas of wellness: **Physical, Emotional, Social, Intellectual, Spiritual**, and **Motivational.**

The data generated from the FOI responses related to each university's wellbeing provision spanning the past five years. The request required institutions to answer a series of questions and provide relevant links to the publicly available information as a prerequisite to being included in this report. The questionnaire included both Yes/No questions and numerical ratings and was sent to all UK universities. Some of the universities responded to all questions on a Yes/No basis and therefore all responses were scored in this way to ensure parity of scores. Universities who responded with a numerical rating were attributed a ‘No’ score if zero and a ‘Yes’ score for non-zero answers. All questions sent to them can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

After receiving the data, it was analysed at an individual and regional level to produce the wellness index. Given the nature of the questions, a handful of universities received the same ranking across the domains. To create a more diverse set of data, Learning Labs added a multiplier to the scores based on their total wellness response, which successfully developed a clear ranking among the institutions.

Based on the data from 74 responding institutions, the universities have been ranked accordingly. Of the institutions who responded, three of them responded partially, whilst the rest provided a full set of data.

**Closing Comments**

By analysing all six domains, Learning Labs were able to collect an accurate set of data which specifically identifies areas where individual institutions could improve their provision. Going forward, this Wellness Index can be used to analyse YoY regional and national mental wellness support trends in the UK as well as monitor the mental wellbeing support offered to students across the UK.

## **Physical Wellness**

The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM describes **Physical Wellness** as being physically fit, sleeping well, concentrating well, and rarely suffering from disease. More broadly, it means ensuring that you provide your body with the ingredients it needs to function at its best.

Learning Labs have divided **Physical Wellness** into three categories: **Exercise**, **Nutrition** and **Rest**. These categories have been used to measure the level of **physical** wellness at universities. Making sure you are hydrated, eating healthy foods, moving your body, and limiting harmful substances such as smoking or drinking excessive alcohol are all integral to a healthy mind.

Universities can help their students' **Physical Wellness** by providing healthy food alternatives during breaks or by providing free fruit in common areas. Substance abuse is common among UK students in their first year. To tackle this, universities could offer free educational sessions to inform students about the dangers of excessive drinking, smoking, or drug use. To help encourage students to be active, universities could offer subsidised gym memberships. It can be daunting for some students to have to pay a standing order each month for a gym membership, so providing a discount might be a helpful motivator.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain.***

**Analysis**

The report found that of the participating UK universities, 43.24% of them scored 5.88 or above, which is the UK average for physical wellness.

Analysing the average scores by UK countries, England scored the highest for physical wellbeing, with 6.61 points. Scotland came in second with a score of 6.2, and Wales came in third with a score of 5.56. Northern Ireland ranked last in the UK for this domain, receiving a score of 4.86.

Regionally, the East of England ranked on top, scoring 65.07% above the UK average for physical wellness. Greater London is the lowest-scoring English region, scoring 21.75% below the average.

Out of all the higher education institutions in this study, the report identified that one of the top three institutions for physical wellness were campus universities.

The university that placed the highest for the physical wellness of its students was York St John University, with a score of 12.64 and a ranking of 115.01% above the UK average.

**The top 10 universities for Physical Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **10 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
|  | **University** | **Physical** | **Physical (+/-)** |
| 1 | **York St John University** | 12.64 | 115.01% |
| 2 | **University of Essex** | 11.67 | 98.47% |
| 2 | **University of Roehampton** | 11.67 | 98.47% |
| 4 | **Anglia Ruskin University** | 11.50 | 95.64% |
| 4 | **University of Manchester** | 11.50 | 95.64% |
| 6 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 9.58 | 63.03% |
| 7 | **Nottingham Trent University** | 9.44 | 60.67% |
|  7 | **University of the West of Scotland** | 9.44 | 60.67% |
| 9 | **Bournemouth University** | 9.31 | 58.31% |
|  9 | **Northumbria University** | 9.31 | 58.31% |
| 11 | **University of Oxford** | 8.75 | 48.86% |

## **Emotional Wellness**

The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM define **Emotional Wellness** as understanding and appreciating a balance of emotions day-to-day but also having the resilience to cope well with stressful or unexpected events. Separating the concept of **Emotional Wellness** into sub-domains, Learning Labs measured the universities' levels of **Daily Balance** and **Resilience** to help them determine a score.

When someone has low **Emotional Eellness**, it can negatively impact how they function in their daily lives. It can affect your ability to process information, make decisions, remember things, and significantly impact your motivation to do the simplest tasks.

A staggering 1 in 4 people suffer from mental health issues in the UK each year (9). This can be even higher in the student population: across UK higher education institutions, one-third of students “reported clinical levels of distress", in addition to 40% of further education students in their first year. University students’ risk being affected because they are put in a potentially vulnerable situation. Some students have never lived away from home, and many have taken out loans to afford the move to another city.

Universities have a huge role to play in supporting their students’ **emotional support**, and there are many ways in which they can help. To help new students manage their daily balance of emotions, universities could offer a buddy system where a senior student is paired with someone who has just started and checks in on them during their first couple of weeks. Universities could also offer an anonymous helpline that students could call to talk about their concerns that they feel they cannot express to their peers. If professional help were needed, the helpline volunteer would be able to 'signpost’ the student appropriately.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain.***

**Analysis**

Questions were divided into two subcategories to evaluate the **emotional support** offered by higher education institutions: **Resilience** and **Daily Balance**. The report revealed that of the UK universities surveyed, 60.81% scored above the UK average for **Emotional Wellness** which was 6.66 points.

Scotland appeared at the top of the leaderboard with a score of 7.05. England came in a close second place with 7.04, followed by Wales with 5.57 points and Northern Ireland falling below the UK average with 4.17 points.

From a regional perspective, the East of England scored the highest, with an average of 8.54, placing them 27.82% above the UK average. At the opposite end of the scale is Northern Ireland, positioned at the bottom of all the regions with a score of 37.65% below the UK average.

At the higher end of the leaderboard, three out of the top ten universities for **emotional support** are campus-based.

The university that ranked the highest for **emotional support** was London-based Royal Veterinary College, which scored 9.58 points, which positioned them at 43.79% above the UK average.

**The top 10 universities for Emotional Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **11 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
|  | **University** | **Emotional** | **Emotional (+/-)** |
| 1 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 9.58 | 43.79% |
| 2 | **Liverpool Hope University** | 9.03 | 35.46% |
| 3 | **City University London** | 8.89 | 33.37% |
| 3 | **University of Northampton** | 8.89 | 33.37% |
| 3 | **University of Wolverhampton** | 8.89 | 33.37% |
| 6 | **University of Essex** | 8.75 | 31.29% |
| 6 | **University of Roehampton** | 8.75 | 31.29% |
| 6 | **York St John University** | 8.75 | 31.29% |
| 9 | **Anglia Ruskin University** | 8.63 | 29.42% |
| 10 | **University Of Plymouth** | 8.61 | 29.21% |

## **Social Wellness**

As The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM outlines, someone with positive **Social Wellness** has strong relationships that create positive feelings of love and care, and connections to broader communities to feel valued. Learning Labs sub-categorised the idea of **Social Wellness** into **Community** and **Relationships.**

Loneliness is a significant problem among the student population; it affects 1 in 4 students, substantially increasing from 1 in 20 non-students in the broader sample population (10). Students are away from their usual friends and family at university and are forced to form new social groups. While this can be an exciting concept, for many, it is a considerable challenge that some students find difficult to grasp. This can lead to feelings of loneliness and decrease a student's **Social Wellness**. Feeling included is essential to our **Social Wellness**, and the university should be trying to support its students.

To prevent the decrease in **Social Wellness** among its students, universities could set up course-specific social media groups where events are organised. This will create a hub where students are notified about social gatherings that people with similar interests attend. Universities could organise free events in the student union, which are open to all; this would allow students to get involved and meet new people without worrying about costs. Participatory arts, such as music or singing groups, offer places to share cultural values and traditions, celebrate identities, and enable feelings of belonging. They could be a place for social connection within student communities.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain.***

**Analysis**

Learning Labs focused their questions on **relationships** and **community** for this section. The report found that institutions in the UK tended to score highly for social wellness, with 63.51% of them scoring the UK average of 8.04 points.

Out of the UK countries, Scotland placed at the top of the leaderboard for social wellness, scoring an average of 8.981. England came second with an average score of 8.49, followed by Wales with 7.43. The data collected revealed that Northern Ireland scored only 4.17 points for **Social Wellness**, which puts them at 48.46% below the UK average. From a regional perspective, the East of England placed at the top with an average of 10.44 points, putting them 29.14% above the norm.

Of the top ten universities for **Social Wellness**, University of Essex, University of Roehampton and York St John placed joint first with a score of 10.69. Two of the top ten universities are campus-based.

**The top 10 universities for Social Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **14 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
| **Rank** | **University** | **Social** | **Social (+/-)** |
| 1 | **University of Essex** | 10.69 | 32.98% |
| 1 | **University of Roehampton** | 10.69 | 32.98% |
| 1 | **York St John University** | 10.69 | 32.98% |
| 4 | **Anglia Ruskin University** | 10.54 | 31.08% |
| 4 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 10.54 | 31.08% |
| 4 | **University of Manchester** | 10.54 | 31.08% |
| 7 | **Nottingham Trent University** | 10.39 | 29.18% |
| 7 | **University of the West of Scotland** | 10.39 | 29.18% |
| 9 | **Bournemouth University** | 10.24 | 27.28% |
| 9 | **London South Bank University** | 10.24 | 27.28% |
| 9 | **Northumbria University** | 10.24 | 27.28% |
| 12 | **University of East Anglia** | 10.08 | 25.38% |
| 12 | **University of Edinburgh** | 10.08 | 25.38% |
| 12 | **University of Portsmouth** | 10.08 | 25.38% |

## **Intellectual Wellness**

The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM describe **Intellectual Wellness** as pursuing regular activities that stimulate the mind and bring joy to the individual or satisfy the soul.

Learning Labs have split the concept of intellectual wellness into **Learning, Experiences**, and **Hobbies**. Education impacts our **Intellectual Wellness**, and students are no different. It develops a sense of purpose, assists in your academic development, and can encourage interaction with your peers (11).

Spending time taking part in activities that are enjoyable has been found to be positive for wellbeing, whether it be arts and cultural activities, sports and exercise, or spending time outdoors. This is an opportunity to both have a positive experience, and also develop and enhance the skills we need for all areas of our lives. It is an opportunity to get out, meet people, and improve skills such as communication as well as specific skills that can help with our creativity. For example, spending time in nature helps to reduce stress, makes us feel more creative, and helps with memory retention. Hobbies in general have been linked to improving stress, low mood and depression.

Universities are institutions where learning is expected but not limited to seminar rooms or lecture theatres. Alongside providing quality teaching during timetabled hours, universities could be giving their students opportunities to further their learning. One way they can do this is by hosting student career fairs.

This enables them to start thinking about their future aspirations and the steps they can take to maximise their skills. In addition, universities can ensure they provide sufficient access to societies, clubs, and sports teams to enable students to learn new hobbies.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain.***

**Analysis**

When analysing the **Intellectual Wellness** of universities, we based the questions on learning, experiences, and interests. For this domain, 62.16% of all universities hit the UK average of 11.04 points or above.

Scotland came out on top after scoring an average of 11.84 points and ranking 4.41% above the UK average. England followed in second place with an average score of 11.71. Wales placed third for **Intellectual Wellness**, with an average score of 9.84 points. Northern Ireland placed last in this domain with an average score of 9.03.

Looking into specific regions, the East of England was the best for **Intellectual Wellness**, sitting 22.71% above the UK average. Yorkshire scored 25.94% below the UK average and is the lowest of all regions for this domain.

Of the top 10 universities for **Intellectual Wellness**, two were campus-based.

**The top 10 universities for Intellectual Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **10 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
|  | **University** | **Score** | **Intellectual (+/-)** |
| 1 | **University of Essex** | 14.58 | 32.10% |
| 1 | **University of Roehampton** | 14.58 | 32.10% |
| 3 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 14.38 | 30.21% |
| 3 | **University of Manchester** | 14.38 | 30.21% |
| 5 | **Nottingham Trent University** | 14.17 | 28.32% |
| 5 | **University of the West of Scotland** | 14.17 | 28.32% |
| 7 | **Bournemouth University** | 13.96 | 26.43% |
| 7 | **London South Bank University** | 13.96 | 26.43% |
| 7 | **Northumbria University** | 13.96 | 26.43% |
| 10 | **University of East Anglia** | 13.75 | 24.55% |
| 10 | **University of Edinburgh** | 13.75 | 24.55% |
| 10 | **University of Portsmouth** | 13.75 | 24.55% |

##

## **Spiritual Wellness**

Positive **Spiritual Wellness** indicates that an individual has a personal and meaningful purpose and creates a positive sense of self and a positive impact on others. It has three specific components: making sense of life; pursuing a goal; and knowing what you are doing matters (12). To accurately measure the level of **Spiritual Wellness** among university students, Learning Labs has divided the concept into two categories: **Self-esteem** and **Purpose**.

This relates closely to the goals that people set for themselves in their lives. Evidence has found that when people create goals that are linked to commitments to others, whether they be friends, family, or wider communities, these can result in increased life satisfaction, over and above goals solely related to personal achievement.

Universities can help towards spiritual wellness by encouraging students to get involved with volunteering around campus. Volunteering can give you a sense of purpose and belonging (13); you can meet new people and be a part of something larger, such as a community.

By creating opportunities for students to volunteer, universities are enabling students to improve their **Spiritual Wellness**, which will help to fulfil their sense of purpose and self-worth.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain***.

**Analysis**

Learning Labs focused on questions around **purpose** and **self-esteem** when measuring the **Spiritual Wellness** of the universities surveyed. 58.11% of all UK universities scored the average of 6.63 or above for this domain.

Scotland came top in this domain with an average score of 7.24. In the second position, scoring an average of 7.05 for **Spiritual Wellness** was England. Wales followed in third with an average of 5.91 points, and Northern Ireland placed last in this domain with an average of 4.86 points. This places Northern Ireland % below the UK average for **Spiritual Wellness**.

On a regional level, the, East of England scored the highest, 25.77% above the UK average, whereas Yorkshire appeared at the bottom of the leaderboard, placing 22.21% below the UK average.

Of the top 10 universities, one of them was campus-based. The top three universities the University of Essex, University of Roehampton and York St John University all placed 31.96% above the UK average for this domain.

**The top 10 universities for Spiritual Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **13 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
|  | **University** | **Score** | **Spiritual (+/-)** |
| 1 | **University of Essex** | 8.75 | 31.96% |
| 1 | **University of Roehampton** | 8.75 | 31.96% |
| 1 | **York St John University** | 8.75 | 31.96% |
| 4 | **Anglia Ruskin University** | 8.63 | 30.07% |
| 4 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 8.63 | 30.07% |
| 4 | **University of Manchester** | 8.63 | 30.07% |
| 7 | **Nottingham Trent University** | 8.50 | 28.19% |
| 7 | **University of the West of Scotland** | 8.50 | 28.19% |
| 9 | **Bournemouth University** | 8.38 | 26.30% |
| 9 | **London South Bank University** | 8.38 | 26.30% |
| 9 | **Northumbria University** | 8.38 | 26.30% |
| 12 | **University of East Anglia** | 8.25 | 24.42% |
| 12 | **University of Edinburgh** | 8.25 | 24.42% |
| 12 | **University of Portsmouth** | 8.25 | 24.42% |

## **Motivational Wellness**

The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM define **Motivational Wellness** as feeling capable of making life-related decisions linked to our personal goals. **Motivational wellness** is the drive within an individual to set and pursue their goals.

In this report, Learning Labs split the idea of **Motivational Wellness** into two subdomains: **Autonomy** and **Competence**. It is the determination to know what you want and the steps you need to take to achieve it.

Pursuing goals and actions that are self-driven rather than controlled by external factors is associated with higher levels of psychological wellbeing as they are more likely to be aligned with an individual's values, sense of self, and concerns. For students, there is evidence to prove a correlation between having a sense of autonomy and students performing well academically (14). If you have a desire to improve yourself, you will be more likely to succeed in what you are trying to achieve.

Students have reported that they were able to find more flow when working in a team, especially if they were able to speak with each other. This happened regardless of the number of skills needed. Universities can ensure they offer team activities both as part of the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities. In addition, universities could ensure students have autonomy over the modules they choose to study and have the opportunity to participate in modules outside of their degree programme for additional credits, or maybe ensure each program makes use of coursework as a way for students to display their autonomy.

***\*See Appendix 1 for the questions administered to universities about this domain.***

**Analysis**

To understand the level of **Motivational Wellness** the universities have, Learning Labs centred the questions sent to the higher education institutions around **Autonomy** and **Competence**. 52.70% of all universities scored the UK average of 10.33 points or more for this domain.

Of all the UK countries, institutions in Wales scored the highest average for motivational wellness, scoring 12.50. Scotland followed, averaging 10.89 points. England placed third with an average of 10.75 points, and Northern Ireland placed fourth with 7.64 points.

In the regional analysis, the East of England scored the highest, placing 25.72% above the UK average. At the other end of the leaderboard, Yorkshire came last with an average of 8.02 points, placing 22.36% below the UK average.

Of the top ten universities for **Motivational Wellness**, one of them was campus-based.

**The top 10 universities for Motivational Wellness**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **13 universities in Top 10** |  |  |
|  | **University** | **Score** | **Motivational (+/-)** |
| 1 | **University of Essex** | 13.61 | 35.87% |
| 1 | **University of Roehampton** | 13.61 | 35.87% |
| 1 | **York St John University** | 13.61 | 35.87% |
| 4 | **Anglia Ruskin University** | 13.42 | 33.93% |
| 4 | **Royal Veterinary College** | 13.42 | 33.93% |
| 4 | **University of Manchester** | 13.42 | 33.93% |
| 7 | **Nottingham Trent University** | 13.22 | 31.99% |
| 7 | **University of the West of Scotland** | 13.22 | 31.99% |
| 9 | **Bournemouth University** | 13.03 | 30.05% |
| 9 | **London South Bank University** | 13.03 | 30.05% |
| 9 | **Northumbria University** | 13.03 | 30.05% |
| 12 | **University of Edinburgh** | 12.83 | 28.11% |
| 12 | **University of Portsmouth** | 12.83 | 28.11% |

##

## **Conclusion**

This report, powered by Learning Labs, has gathered the data to identify which universities are the front-runners in prioritising the mental wellbeing of their students. Of the 74 UK universities that were surveyed, it is clear that there is a varying level of wellbeing provision being offered to students across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Using The Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM, created by Learning Lab’s parent company eQuality Solutions, this report collated an in-depth analysis of the wellbeing support being offered at UK institutions. Based on data provided by the individual institutions, each university was given a score for the following domains: **Physical Wellness, Emotional Wellness, Social Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, Spiritual Wellness, Motivational Wellness** and a total score for overall wellness. To see HEI’s ranked by total score see page 50.

If you would like further information about your university’s ranking or would like your university to be included in the 2023 HEI Wellness Index report, please email hello@e-q-s.com.

If you would like to know more about the Learning Labs **Six Domains of Mental WellnessTM** or how your university could benefit from the Learning Labs digital portal, please email info@learninglabs.co

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**The Index – Ranking of UK Universities’ Wellness Provision**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 1 | University of Essex | East | full | 70.00 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 1 | University of Roehampton | Greater London | full | 70.00 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 1 | York St John University | Yorkshire | full | 70.00 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | Anglia Ruskin University | East | full | 69.00 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 6 |
| 4 | Royal Veterinary College | Greater London | full | 69.00 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 4 |
| 4 | University of Manchester | North West | full | 69.00 | 26 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 7 | Nottingham Trent University | East Midlands | full | 68.00 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| 7 | University of the West of Scotland | Scotland | full | 68.00 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| 9 | Bournemouth University | South West | full | 67.00 | 15 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 12 |
| 9 | London South Bank University | Greater London | full | 67.00 | 33 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 9 |
| 9 | Northumbria University | North East | full | 67.00 | 33 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 9 |
| 12 | University of East Anglia | East | full | 66.00 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 26 | 13 |
| 12 | University of Edinburgh | Scotland | full | 66.00 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 12 | 18 |
| 12 | University of Portsmouth | South East | full | 66.00 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 12 | 18 |

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| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 15 | Birmingham City University | West Midlands | full | 65.00 | 2 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 37 |
| 15 | Liverpool Hope University | North West | full | 65.00 | 19 | 15 | 15 | 28 | 14 | 20 |
| 15 | Royal Holloway | Greater London | full | 65.00 | 37 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 20 |
| 18 | Cardiff Met | Wales | full | 64.00 | 3 | 18 | 18 | 29 | 17 | 38 |
| 18 | City University London | Greater London | full | 64.00 | 3 | 18 | 18 | 29 | 17 | 38 |
| 18 | Cranfield University | South East | full | 64.00 | 3 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 54 |
| 18 | London School of Economics | Greater London | full | 64.00 | 20 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 29 | 29 |
| 18 | University of Northampton | East Midlands | full | 64.00 | 20 | 18 | 18 | 29 | 29 | 23 |
| 18 | University of Sussex | South East | full | 64.00 | 20 | 18 | 48 | 29 | 17 | 14 |
| 18 | University of Wolverhampton | West Midlands | full | 64.00 | 39 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 29 | 23 |
| 25 | London Business School | Greater London | full | 63.00 | 23 | 40 | 24 | 20 | 32 | 30 |
| 25 | University of Huddersfield | Yorkshire | full | 63.00 | 40 | 40 | 37 | 20 | 21 | 25 |
| 25 | University of Oxford | South East | full | 63.00 | 40 | 40 | 24 | 20 | 32 | 25 |
| 25 | University of Swansea | Wales | full | 63.00 | 40 | 25 | 63 | 34 | 21 | 11 |

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| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 25 | University St Andrews | Scotland | full | 63.00 | 48 | 25 | 24 | 34 | 21 | 25 |
| 25 | Warwick University | West Midlands | full | 63.00 | 48 | 25 | 24 | 20 | 21 | 30 |
| 31 | University of Gloucestershire | South West | full | 62.00 | 10 | 28 | 64 | 24 | 25 | 40 |
| 31 | University Of Plymouth | South West | full | 62.00 | 44 | 28 | 28 | 36 | 46 | 15 |
| 33 | Edinburgh Napier University | Scotland | full | 61.00 | 13 | 45 | 39 | 25 | 34 | 56 |
| 33 | Heriot-Watt University | Scotland | full | 61.00 | 13 | 30 | 29 | 37 | 48 | 43 |
| 33 | Keele University | West Midlands | full | 61.00 | 28 | 30 | 29 | 25 | 48 | 43 |
| 33 | University of Aberystwyth | Wales | full | 61.00 | 28 | 30 | 39 | 25 | 39 | 43 |
| 33 | University of Brighton | South East | full | 61.00 | 28 | 30 | 29 | 37 | 27 | 63 |
| 33 | University of Kent | South East | full | 61.00 | 58 | 30 | 39 | 37 | 34 | 16 |
| 39 | Glasgow Caledonian University | Scotland | full | 60.00 | 31 | 35 | 52 | 40 | 36 | 47 |
| 39 | Liverpool John Moores | North West | full | 60.00 | 31 | 35 | 42 | 40 | 50 | 33 |
| 39 | Queen Margaret University | Greater London | full | 60.00 | 45 | 51 | 32 | 40 | 36 | 33 |
| 39 | Teeside University | North East | full | 60.00 | 53 | 35 | 42 | 40 | 28 | 47 |
| 39 | University of South Wales | Wales | full | 60.00 | 53 | 51 | 32 | 48 | 36 | 17 |

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| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 44 | Canterbury Christ Church University | South East | full | 59.00 | 35 | 38 | 44 | 54 | 41 | 35 |
| 44 | De Montford University | East Midlands | full | 59.00 | 35 | 38 | 34 | 33 | 52 | 64 |
| 44 | Kingston University | Greater London | full | 59.00 | 46 | 46 | 34 | 44 | 41 | 50 |
| 44 | University of Glasgow | Scotland | full | 59.00 | 55 | 46 | 34 | 44 | 52 | 28 |
| 48 | Imperial College London | Greater London | full | 57.00 | 38 | 57 | 59 | 46 | 44 | 36 |
| 48 | University of Coventry | West Midlands | full | 57.00 | 63 | 49 | 45 | 56 | 44 | 22 |
| 50 | Guildhall School of Music and Drama | Greater London | full | 56.00 | 24 | 43 | 46 | 51 | 61 | 65 |
| 50 | Kings College London | Greater London | full | 56.00 | 24 | 58 | 46 | 51 | 47 | 59 |
| 50 | Royal Academy of Music | Greater London | full | 56.00 | 40 | 43 | 37 | 47 | 61 | 68 |
| 53 | Birbeck, University of London | Greater London | full | 55.00 | 27 | 50 | 49 | 58 | 51 | 69 |
| 53 | University of Winchester | South East | full | 55.00 | 56 | 54 | 60 | 49 | 40 | 60 |
| 55 | St George's University of London | Greater London | full | 54.00 | 50 | 55 | 50 | 60 | 43 | 66 |
| 55 | University of Bath | South West | full | 54.00 | 64 | 59 | 50 | 60 | 54 | 32 |

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| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 57 | University of Surrey | South East | full | 53.00 | 51 | 53 | 65 | 62 | 67 | 41 |
| 57 | University of West London | Greater London | full | 53.00 | 51 | 56 | 70 | 50 | 55 | 61 |
| 57 | Westminster University | Greater London | full | 53.00 | 57 | 62 | 65 | 55 | 55 | 41 |
| 60 | Brunel University | Greater London | full | 52.00 | 47 | 48 | 67 | 51 | 68 | 70 |
| 60 | Central School of Speech and Drama | Greater London | full | 52.00 | 59 | 60 | 53 | 67 | 57 | 55 |
| 60 | Sheffield Hallam University | Yorkshire | full | 52.00 | 65 | 63 | 53 | 57 | 58 | 46 |
| 63 | Bath Spa University | South West | full | 51.00 | 60 | 61 | 55 | 64 | 59 | 62 |
| 63 | University of Strathclyde | Scotland | full | 51.00 | 66 | 64 | 55 | 64 | 59 | 49 |
| 65 | Bucks New Univeristy | Greater London | full | 50.00 | 61 | 65 | 57 | 68 | 65 | 51 |
| 65 | Goldsmiths, University of London | Greater London | full | 50.00 | 61 | 65 | 57 | 68 | 63 | 57 |
| 65 | Queen's University Belfast | Northern Ireland | full | 50.00 | 67 | 67 | 68 | 59 | 63 | 51 |
| 68 | Manchester Metropolitan University | North West | full | 48.00 | 69 | 70 | 61 | 66 | 66 | 58 |
| 68 | University of Reading | South East | full | 48.00 | 69 | 70 | 61 | 63 | 69 | 53 |
| 70 | University of York | Yorkshire | full | 42.00 | 68 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 70 | 67 |

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| **Rank** | **University** | **Region** | **Response Type** | **Total Points** | **Emotional** | **Social** | **Spiritual** | **Intellectual** | **Motivational** | **Physical** |
| 71 | University of Hull | Yorkshire | full | 29.00 | 71 | 69 | 73 | 73 | 71 | 73 |
| 72 | Royal College of Art | Greater London | partial | 23.00 | 72 | 72 | 71 | 71 | 72 | 71 |
| 73 | University of Greenwich | Greater London | partial | 22.00 | 73 | 73 | 72 | 72 | 73 | 72 |
| 74 | Cardiff University | Wales | partial | 9.00 | 74 | 74 | 74 | 74 | 74 | 74 |

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**Appendix 1**

**Below are the Freedom of Information (FOI) request questions that were sent to universities who took part in the survey.**

**Physical Wellness**

1. Does your university have an on-campus gym for students?

2. Are the on-campus fitness facilities free to access for students?

3. Are there costs associated with joining sports teams?

4. Do you subsidise the cost of on-campus fitness facilities for students receiving a bursary, grant, or other forms of funding?

5. The university subsidises third-party gym memberships for students unable or unwilling to use on-site facilities.

6. The university subsidises the costs associated with sports teams for students receiving a bursary, grant, or other forms of funding.

7. Does the university strategically place vending machines or other self-serve food outlets in buildings that may not have dining facilities?

8. The university ensures students have access to nutritious food outlets on campus.

9. The university provides education to students relating to good nutrition.

10. Does the university provide advice to students regarding alcohol, smoking, and drug abuse?

11. Does your university offer addiction support groups or services?

12. Your university has clubs or societies dedicated to students struggling with substance abuse so those individuals can connect with others dealing with similar issues.

13. Your university hosts "non-alcohol" nights or events to accommodate sober students.

**Emotional Wellness**

1. Does the university have a dedicated department for addressing mental health issues; providing access to counselling, CBT, etc.

2. Is the service provided for a limited period of time?

3. If your university has a dedicated department or service for addressing mental health issues, they are available to students in multiple formats. (i.e., on campus/online/etc.).

4. There are student support plans to facilitate long-term support.

5. The university has connections with external bodies in the event of an urgent request.

6. The university monitors students' activities to identify indicators of poor or declining mental health.

7. Do students have free or subsidised access to outlets for emotional management? (i.e., sports teams, access to fitness centres/sports societies, or intramural clubs)

8. Is the provision of these resources limited to specific days or times of the day? (i.e., not 24/7 access).

9. Students are given a point of contact in the event of personal or academic concerns. (This can be either another student or a member of staff).

10. Students have access to free online resilience resources.

**Social Wellness**

1. Does your university provide access to societies, clubs, or sports teams?

2. Are these activities regularly promoted to students for maximum uptake?

3. Your university works with students to develop supportive and collaborative learning communities.

4. Your university actively works to ensure belonging, social cohesion, and acceptance of individual differences.

5. Your university devotes resources to ensuring social integration for those who are less connected to campus or who are more vulnerable to isolation or a sense of belonging. (i.e., commuting students, online students, part-time students, disabled students, international students, and BAME students).

6. Your university supports students with their living arrangements following year 1.

7. Does the university host on-campus events to foster a sense of community?

8. Your university ensures that it supports students to find their friendship group and build a sense of belonging, particularly in year 1.

9. Group work is encouraged within year 1 to help facilitate relationship building among students.

10. Are there programs for current students to support new students to become acclimated?

11. The university has resources to support students who experience isolation or a relationship breakdown.

**Intellectual Wellness**

1. Does your university provide sufficient access to societies, clubs, and sports teams?

2. Does your university support individuals with additional needs who want to engage in extracurricular activities?

3. Your university ensures that student voices play an active role in helping to understand the needs of the current cohort so the university can tailor their offering accordingly.

4. Your university actively encourages its students to pursue extracurricular activities that enable them to expand their hobbies and interests. (i.e., hosting extracurricular fairs throughout the year; regularly distributing promotional materials; keeping students informed via e-newsletters; etc.).

5. Your university encourages staff and students to spend time in nature for the benefit of their health.

6. Does your university have a dedicated 'careers service’ or development centre to support students' professional development?

7. Your university regularly hosts ongoing workshops around professional development for students (i.e., CV support/interview prep/career exploration/etc.).

8. Students have access to leadership positions within the university, such as peer mentoring, course representatives, school representatives, etc.

9. Your university helps to facilitate internships (both during and outside of term time).

10. Students are encouraged and able to participate in activities outside their course for a rounded experience (i.e., learning a new language or trying a sport they've never played).

11. Is medical proof or a doctor's note required for students to request an extension or other adjustments due to mental health or long-term conditions?

12. Students are given a point of contact in the event of personal or academic concerns. (This can be either another student or a member of staff).

13. Your university ensures that curriculums aim to encourage a focus on deep learning, meaning, mastery, and development.

14. Your university ensures that the link between learning and wellbeing is considered for the full student cohort. (i.e., undergrad, post-graduate researchers, postgraduate students,

part-time students, and online learners).

15. Specialist learning support is available to help students academically. (i.e., provisions to help students with finding journal articles, using databases, or making the best use of other library services and resources).

**Spiritual Wellness**

1. Does your university provide access to counselling or CBT?

Does your university have cultural or linguistic societies?

3. Your university ensures that student voices play an active role in helping to understand the needs of the current cohort so the university can tailor their offering accordingly.

4. The university's staff are equipped with training to develop the confidence of students and promote positive mental health.

5. Does the university help to facilitate friendship groups, meet-ups, etc. outside of clubs/representatives, societies, or sports teams?

6. The university hosts regular events or programs to expose students to new ways of thinking.

7. The university provides volunteering opportunities for students (both within the university and the local community).

8. Students have access to leadership positions within the university, such as peer mentoring, course representatives, school representatives, etc.

9. The university provides sufficient opportunities for students’ personal development.

**Motivational Wellness**

1. Does the university provide interventions for those at risk?

2. Does the university provide support while waiting for external intervention?

3. Does the university ensure the safety of the physical environment?

4. Lecture and seminar materials are available to students in multiple formats. (i.e., face-to-face delivery and online recording).

5. Students have autonomy over the modules they choose to study.

6. Students have the opportunity to participate in modules outside of their degree programme for additional credits.

7. Each program makes use of coursework as a way for students to display their autonomy.

8. Students can participate in activities outside of their course to demonstrate their independence in learning new things. (i.e., learning a new language or trying a sport they've never played).

9. The university equips students with positive mental health practices so that each individual is able to play an active role in the development of their own wellbeing.

10. The university ensures that students are supported to transition successfully beyond university into their career or further study.

11. Does your university have course/school level awards based on contribution and performance?

12. Does your university have a dedicated 'Careers Service’ or Development Centre to support students' professional development?

13. Your university helps to facilitate internships (both during and outside of term time).

14. The university, through education and resources, ensures that students can collectively develop the confidence and ability to recognise and respond to poor mental health.

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