

More than
bricks and mortar.
A guide to the
Russell Group



On average the Russell Group of universities receives approximately 800,000 applications for around 100,000 places per UCAS cycle. This makes its members the most competitive and selective Higher Education institutions in the UK. Despite this popularity, many applicants are unclear as to what exactly the Russell Group represents. This guide seeks to clarify what membership to this elite group entails, and more importantly, how it impacts a student's learning experience and their career opportunities beyond graduation.

Is it the top 10 universities in the UK?

No, it's not based on the current top 10 universities. What you will notice is that if you compare league tables, those in the top 10 are often different depending on who produces the table. The Russell Group is made up of the following 24 institutions and never changes:



Is it made up of the oldest universities in the UK?

Well, although institutions like Oxford are over 600 years old, this doesn't have an influence on being part of the Russell Group. The University of Southampton, for example, only received its charter to award degrees in 1952.

It's a "Red Brick" university isn't it?

Some of the older institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge do indeed have many old, red brick buildings, but this is not a main factor. Southampton has a couple of buildings made of red bricks, but has a massive programme of investment planned. This includes a recent investment of £50 million on a new Life Sciences building and £1.5 million on a uni-link transport interchange at our Highfield campus.

Why is it called the Russell Group?

The Russell Group is so named because the first informal meetings of the Group took place at the Russell Hotel in Russell Square, London.

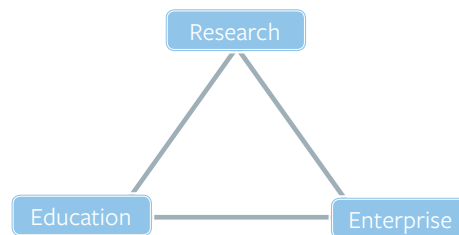
You can only go there if you get AAA at A Level right?

No. All institutions are committed to ensuring that the opportunity to study at a Russell Group university is open to as wide a range of students as possible. The universities offer activities and events specifically for students from backgrounds where there is little or no tradition of applying to higher education. Many also have access programmes, such as Southampton's A2S (Access to Southampton) Scheme designed to support students to prepare and move on to university. Typically though, entry requirements range from AAA-BBB, with some institutions also requiring A*s.

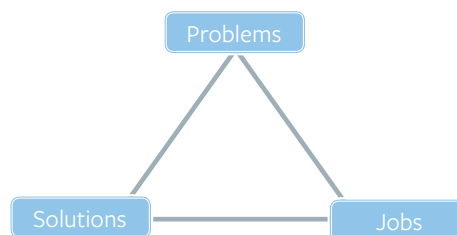
So what is a Russell Group university?

In the simplest term, it's a group of the most research intensive universities in the UK. Russell Group universities are committed to the highest levels of academic excellence in both teaching and research. Students interact with leading thinkers and academics at the forefront of their disciplines. They have access to first class libraries and facilities and a curriculum informed by world class research. Undergraduates have opportunities to engage in research themselves and undertake independent projects while learning alongside motivated and talented peers.

Generally speaking Russell Group Universities place equal emphasis on these three things:



This can also be seen as looking at current and future problems, educating you to find the solutions and providing you with the opportunity to obtain the jobs that are in demand.



What is the purpose of the Russell Group?

The Russell Group states its objectives are to:

- lead the UK's research effort;
- attract the best staff and students to those institutions;
- lobby the government on behalf of staff and students at its members' institutions

What is so special about Russell Group Universities?

Russell Group universities play a major role in the intellectual, cultural and economic life of the UK and have an international reputation for the high quality of their research and teaching. In an increasingly global higher education market, they attract the very best academics and students from around the world, as well as investment from multinational, research intensive businesses. Russell Group universities have a total economic output of £22.3 billion per annum. They are responsible for supporting 243,000 jobs UK-wide and over 80,000 students graduate from Russell Group universities each year.

Why should I be interested in going to a Russell Group university?

The value of the academic experience at Russell Group universities is reflected in a number of ways:

- The combination of excellent teaching and **world class research** across a wide range of subjects. Expect to be challenged!
- Russell Group Universities are highly successful in attracting **talented researchers** from around the world who will be teaching and supporting you.
- The **high competition for places** means that you will be surrounded by other talented and motivated undergraduate students.
- **Student satisfaction rates.** The National Student Survey, the NUS/ HSBC survey and the i-graduate international student survey all found higher rates of satisfaction with the teaching quality at Russell Group universities.
- **Completion rates.** Russell Group universities have the lowest drop-out rates in the UK.
- **Progression to further study.** Russell Group universities have some of the highest percentages of undergraduates proceeding to postgraduate study.
- **Employer demand.** Research undertaken by the Centre for Economics of Education has shown that studying at a Russell Group university attracts a salary top up of approximately 10% over a lifetime compared with other graduates. This is even when other factors affecting wages have been taken into account such as A level scores or parental background.
- This research-rich environment creates the ideal conditions for students to develop their creativity, analytical skills, problem-solving, as well as their team working and communication. These attributes are **highly sought after by employers** and will enable students be successful in their future lives and careers.

Source: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/>