



The University of  
**Nottingham**

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Front cover image:  
Professor Shujie Yao from the School of Contemporary  
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## Nottingham: International research leader **Research Assessment Exercise outcome 2008-2014**

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/research](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research)



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# Our world-changing research

The University of Nottingham is a leading, global, research-intensive university with campuses in the UK, Malaysia and China. Our reputation for world-class research has yielded major scientific breakthroughs such as Nobel-Prize-winning Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) techniques, drug discovery, food technologies and engineering solutions for future economic, social and cultural progress.

We work with global businesses and regional enterprises to drive innovation into the marketplace, powering leading edge technologies in transportation and communications through to developing drugs, medicines and devices for healthcare.

We are working for a sustainable future and are seeking new alternatives for energy in our homes, transportation and businesses in the pressing global challenge of combating climate change.

Already ranked among the UK's elite universities and in global polls for research excellence, our reputation for world-class research was further enhanced with the 2008 results of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). This brochure provides an overview of our outstanding performance.

At the heart of everything we do is our commitment to meet the future research needs of society, industry and government.

# Research powerhouse

The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is considered to be the UK's definitive guide to research quality and excellence, ranking all universities on research strength and rating the academic disciplines they submit on the basis of their international standing. Measured by means of quality – averaging the research carried out within a discipline – and research power – taking into account both quality and the number of academics within a discipline – Nottingham's status was again confirmed as a world-class institution.

In addition to scoring highly in quality rankings covering major disciplines in science, engineering, the social sciences, medicine, business and the arts, it is Nottingham's increase in research power rankings which demonstrate the impressive volume of excellent research which is carried out. We are now ranked in the top seven of all British universities and are one of only two institutions to move into the UK top 10 since 2001 – an increase of seven places, making us the highest mover of any university.

This ranking is even more impressive given the importance of research power indicators, which define overall strength, sustainability and the sheer scale of world-class research taking place across our campuses. Our sustained investment in state-of-the-art research facilities, technologies and recruiting only the best researchers have all contributed to our research power performance.

Nottingham submitted one of the highest numbers of research areas for assessment and 91 per cent of research staff – a testament to our confidence in the international calibre of our academics and the breadth of excellence to be found among our staff and students.

Following the RAE results, 90 per cent of all research at Nottingham has been classified of an 'international standard' and 60 per cent as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'.

## Top 10 UK Universities ranked by Research Power

Rank	Organisation
1	Oxford
2	Cambridge
3	University College London
4	Manchester
5	Edinburgh
6	Imperial College London
7	<b>Nottingham</b>
8	Leeds
9	Sheffield
10	Bristol

Source: *Research Fortnight*, 17 December 2008

“The results are a tribute to the talent and dedication of the University's academic community and the continued excellence of their work. This is a tremendous achievement for Nottingham and confirms our status as a global research-intensive university.”

**Professor David Greenaway**  
Vice-Chancellor



Female undergraduate student working in a chemistry laboratory, University Park Campus



# Topping the polls

**Nottingham's tremendous performance in the Research Assessment Exercise covers all major disciplines from the arts and humanities through to medicine, science and engineering. In terms of research power, 27 areas are in the UK top 10.**

**Likewise in the *Times Higher Education* research quality league tables, 16 of our disciplines feature in the UK top 10. Here, we feature highlights from the 2008 results which illustrate how academic excellence combines with societal impact to deliver real value from both publicly and privately funded research.**

## Pharmacy

Our School of Pharmacy topped the research quality league table and is the leading UK department in its field. Already recognised with a Queen's Award for Enterprise 2007 and the highest levels of teaching quality, we were delighted to add to this the UK top place for internationally leading research. In 2007, we opened our £25 million state-of-the-art Centre for Biomolecular Sciences, housing 300 leading researchers and eight major research groups. Pharmacy staff within the Centre work at the frontier of regenerative medicine, drug discovery, stem cell science and in the battles against healthcare infections.

## Chemistry

Within science, chemistry received superb results, moving to second position in the UK behind Cambridge and ahead of Oxford, cementing its reputation for internationally leading research in the fields of green chemistry, physical, organic and materials research and for its interdisciplinary contributions to medicine and pharmaceutical sciences.

## Physics

Physics surged ahead of competitors to occupy joint second position in the UK top 10 rankings. Since 2001, we have invested heavily in nanoscience and astronomy programmes; our dedicated Magnetic Resonance Centre holds one of the world's most powerful magnets; and most notably, Nottingham physicist Sir Peter Mansfield was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 2003. Of our physics research, 25 per cent was classified as 'world-leading' – an achievement matched by only four other UK institutions.

## Agriculture, food and veterinary sciences

In the fields of agriculture, food and veterinary sciences, Nottingham ranked first nationally for research power and second in the UK for research quality. World-class facilities in plant and animal sciences, food technologies and bioenergy research are based at our Sutton Bonington Campus, and in 2007, Nottingham opened the UK's first Vet School for 50 years receiving Royal College of Veterinary Science accreditation in 2011.

## Engineering

Engineering results climbed spectacularly from our RAE 2001 positions. General engineering now stands third in the UK, with civil engineering and mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering both ranked fourth overall. In addition, the Physical Sciences and Engineering Super-Panel ranks Nottingham fourth in the UK Research Power Quality Index after Cambridge, Oxford and Imperial. Engineering discoveries support the transport and defence sectors, as well as providing innovative solutions for manufacturing processes and tomorrow's healthcare technologies.

## Law and economics

The outstanding reputation of the Schools of Law and Economics were reinforced once more in RAE 2008. Both disciplines were positioned fourth in the UK. Our work in these fields informs national and international policy for government, NGOs and the commercial sector and tackles major societal issues such as Human Rights and the impact of globalisation.

## Modern languages

Within the arts, Nottingham again capitalised on pre-eminence in modern languages, building on our outstanding performance in 2001. Latin American languages hold joint first position in the UK, and American studies also topped the research power table. French and Russian studies stand third and fourth respectively. English language and literature is placed within the UK top five for quality, building on our strong local heritage including Lawrence and Byron and leading international research in emerging areas such as linguistics and Viking studies.



Dr Festo Massawe, an associate professor at University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, researches plant genetics, breeding and physiology

# Overview of our top rated departments

RAE units of assessment	Nottingham's rank within UK Top 100
Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Sciences	1
American Studies and Anglophone Area Studies	1
Iberian and Latin American Languages	1
Pharmacy	1
Chemistry	2
Physics	2
French	3
General Engineering and Mineral Mining Engineering	3
Civil Engineering	4
Economics and Econometrics	4
Law	4
Mechanical, Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering	4
Primary Care and Other Community Based Clinical Subjects	4
Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages	4
Applied Mathematics	5
Architecture and Built Environment	5
English Language and Literature	5
German, Dutch and Scandinavian Languages	5
Nursing and Midwifery	5
Asian Studies	6
Education	6
Geography and Environmental Studies	6
Other Laboratory Based Clinical Sciences	6
Statistics and Operational Research	6
Business and Management Studies	7
Computer Science and Informatics	8
Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies	8
History of Art, Architecture and Design	9
Politics and International Studies	9
Epidemiology and Public Health	10
Music	10
Other Hospital Based Clinical Subjects	10
Psychiatry, Neurosciences and Clinical Psychology	10

Source: Data based on our highest position in either the *Times Higher Education Quality Rankings* or *Research Power Rankings*

## Further information

To find out more about our world-changing research visit: [www.research.nottingham.ac.uk](http://www.research.nottingham.ac.uk)

To view research podcasts and our award-winning Test Tube communications visit: [communications.nottingham.ac.uk/podcasts.html](http://communications.nottingham.ac.uk/podcasts.html)



Charlotte Holden, Chemical Engineering, works on her year-three project, waste water treatment, at University Park Campus