



A Saudi chemical engineer who is now a researcher at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah says he believes the practice harms the reputations of honest Saudi academics

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EDUCATION

# Saudi universities 'pay academics for affiliation to boost ranking claim'

[Charlie Parker](#), [Ben Ellery](#)

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Some of Britain's leading professors are being investigated amid claims that Saudi Arabian universities have been paying academics to lie about their credentials to artificially inflate institutions in international rankings.

Professors based at Leicester, Northumbria and in Scotland have said their main affiliation is with Saudi universities on a university rankings index despite primarily working in the UK.

Analysis by The Times suggests that four UK academics appear to have incorrectly affiliated themselves with Saudi Arabia on the Highly Cited Researchers (HCR) list. In some cases the academics, who are among the most cited in their field in the world, had named Saudi universities as their primary affiliation despite only 3 per cent of their papers acknowledging the country.

The University of Leicester has opened

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