



Rather than being decided by a panel of judges, this award is based on the results of a survey, carried out annually by market research company YouthSight, of more than 15,000 students from higher education institutions across the country.

Students are asked to rate the academic reputation, teaching, social life and facilities of their institutions through a series of separate attributes, including the quality of staff, the university's industry connections, the community atmosphere on campus and general everyday amenities. Each attribute is weighted to reflect its importance in the overall student experience and then informs the results of the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey, which is published each spring.

This particular award is given to the institution that has improved the most in the latest survey, due out in 2016. According to YouthSight, Southampton Solent University improved in almost every category, with some of the biggest increases in poll ratings for the institution's students' union and the quality of campus facilities.

James MacGregor, director of higher education at YouthSight, said: "Having achieved university status a decade ago, Solent's success shows the whole sector what can be achieved in a short time." He added that as well as the specific gains in ratings for the students' union and quality of facilities, "students also rated interactions with staff particularly highly compared with last year, with even stronger showings on having 'helpful/interested staff' and 'high-quality staff/lecturers' than in 2014".