Reinventing global rankings: recognising and rewarding universities' impact through the Sustainable Development Goals

Phil Baty, Chief Knowledge Officer, THE
Chinese mainland hosts top two universities in Asia: global rankings

Oxford Tops Global University Rankings, as China Continues to Make Gains

U.S. remains top overall, but it faces a growing threat as China ramps up higher-education spending

Oxford top of global university rankings

By Sean Coughlan
BBC News family and education correspondent
World rankings method

Teaching (the learning environment)
- Reputation survey: 15%
- Staff-to-student ratio: 4.5%
- Doctorate-to-bachelor's ratio: 2.25%
- Doctorates-awarded-to-academic-staff ratio: 6%
- Institutional income: 2.25%

Research (volume, income and reputation)
- Reputation survey: 18%
- Research income: 6%
- Research productivity: 6%

Citations (research influence)
- 30%

International outlook (staff, students, research)
- International-to-domestic-student ratio: 2.5%

Industry income (knowledge transfer)
- International-to-domestic-staff ratio: 2.5%
- International collaboration: 2.5%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank 2020</th>
<th>Rank 2019</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Country/region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>University of Oxford</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>California Institute of Technology</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Stanford University</td>
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<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Harvard University</td>
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<td>Yale University</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>University of Chicago</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Imperial College London</td>
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Industry income (knowledge transfer)
- International-to-domestic-staff ratio 2.5%
There is no single model of excellence in global higher education

FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE
To help universities understand their market position against their mission. To help students find and access the university best suited to their abilities and aspirations. In doing so, to help higher education deliver transformational teaching, research and innovation.
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The THE University Impact Rankings: A global game changer
Reactions to the new THE University Impact Rankings

“The Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings is the world’s first global attempt to document evidence of universities’ impact on society, rather than just research and teaching performance. Metrics include universities’ policies on academic freedom, their use of secure employment contracts and their share of senior female academic staff and are based on... the 17 UN SDGs.”

World Economic Forum
Reactions to the new THE University Impact Rankings

“New measurement frameworks, such as the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings to measure institutions’ success in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, are a welcome new development and elevate the public perception of the universities most committed to service to humanity.

Maysa Jalbout
Fellow, Brookings
Reactions to the new THE University Impact Rankings

“Momentum is growing across the sector and league table rankings, such as Times Higher Education’s University Impact Rankings, have helped focus minds. Now that the UN’s “Decade of Action” to accelerate the impact of the SDGs has begun we must act. Missing the targets for 2030 is not an option.”

Mark Charlton, associate director of public engagement in the directorate of social impact and engagement, De Montfort University

“The THE University Impact Rankings is different. This new rankings system is a serious attempt to create a more meaningful listing. THE has tried to measure universities on what matters, rather on what can be counted.”

Roger Smith, former head of tertiary education policy, New Zealand
Creating the THE University Impact Rankings
Objectives

Understand how universities are making a positive impact on our world

Show how the Higher Education sector is working towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Showcase aspects of university performance not covered in other rankings

Be fair to universities across the world
  - Recognise that we bring our biases to the process
  - Be committed to improving the rankings year by year
How do we try to make it fair?

• No entry criteria
• Minimise SDGs in submission
• Listen to input from universities, organisations, and individuals
• Publish each of the SDGs, not just overall score
• Banding to reflect uncertainty
FOUR ASPECTS OF THEORY OF CHANGE

- Research
- Stewardship
- Teaching
- Outreach
Methodology example: Climate Action

Universities acting to address climate issues, through research, low carbon use and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>13.i Research</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Elsevier</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.ii Low carbon energy use</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.iii Environmental Education including Disaster Planning</td>
<td>Picklist</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology example: Climate Action

- **Research** is made up of three elements:
  - The proportion of papers in the top 10% of journals as defined by Citescore
  - The Field Weighted Citation Index of papers produced by the university
  - The number of publications

- **Environmental education measures** looks at evidence around the following:
  - Providing local education around the impact of climate change
  - Generating a university climate action plan
  - Working with local or national government to address climate change planning
  - Informing and supporting government on issues associated with climate change
  - Collaborating with NGOs around climate change
Participation in the inaugural rankings: 560 institutions, 75 countries

Country Income Groups
- Low income - $1,045 or less
- Lower middle income - $1,046-$4,125
- Upper middle income - $4,126-$12,735
- High income: nonOECD - $12,736 or more
- High income: OECD - $12,736 or more

Year: 2016
Source: The World Bank Group
Participation in the 2020 rankings: 858 institutions, 89 countries
Participation for 2020: 858 universities
Thank you

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