

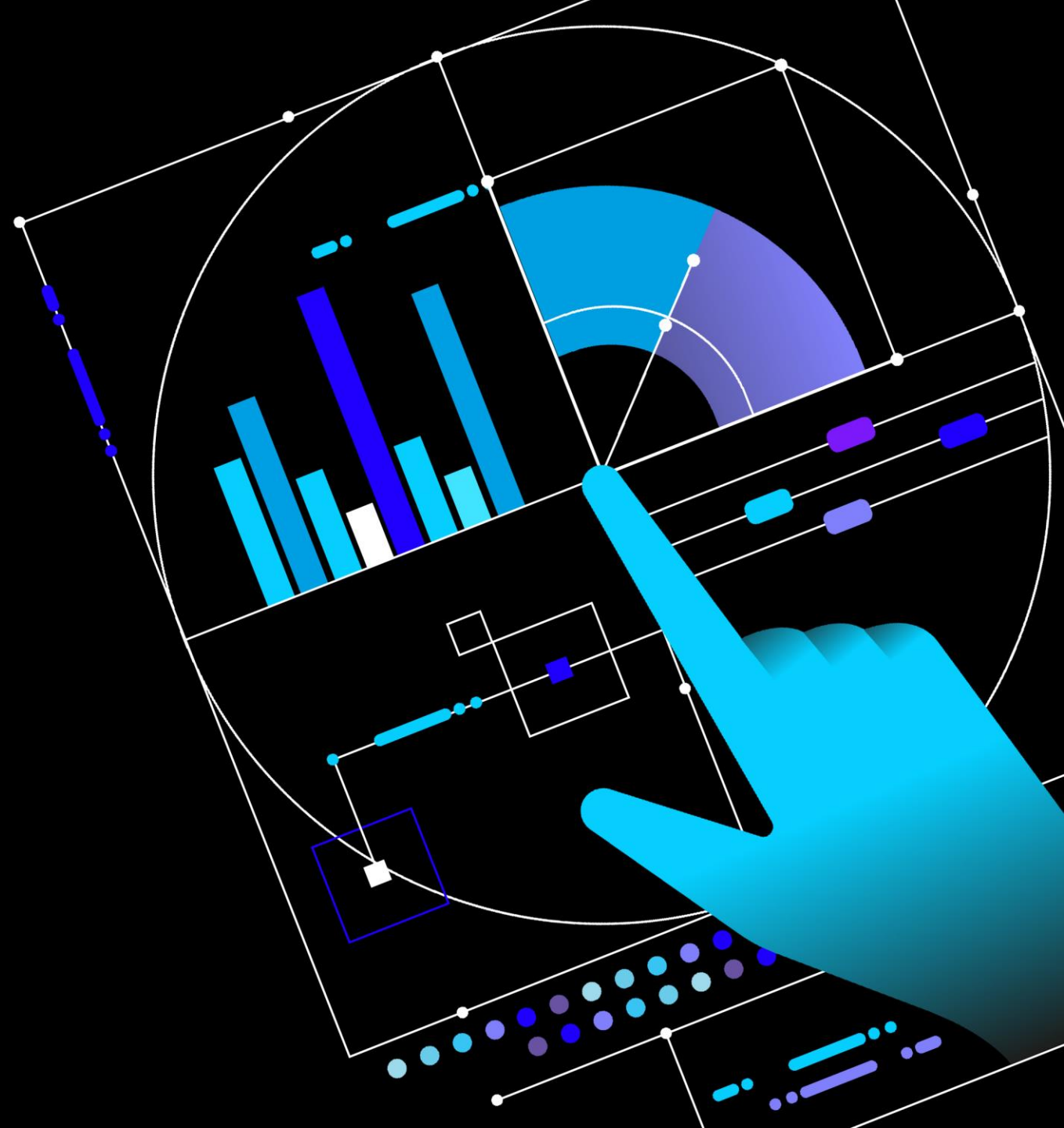


**World
University
Rankings 2025**

Q&A

The 2025 World University Rankings Masterclass: North America - Q&A report

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Times Higher Education



Q&A

Q. Do you have any plans to incorporate your Impact Ranking into the WUR?

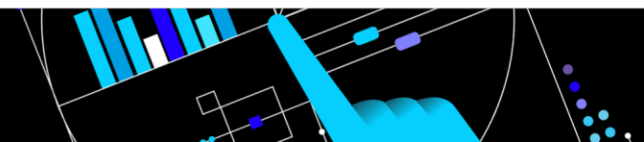
A. Currently, there are no plans to incorporate the Impact Rankings directly into the World University Rankings (WUR). The Impact Rankings and the WUR are separate entities with different methodologies and focus areas. The Impact Rankings evaluate universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while the WUR assesses universities on several performance indicators across teaching, research, knowledge transfer, and international outlook. Each ranking serves a distinct purpose and audience within the higher education community.

Q. Is THE planning to give weight to Study Abroad in the rankings to be published in 2025?

A. The study abroad metric – assessing the provision of international learning opportunities for domestic students – is currently given a weight of 0%. The zero weight is a temporary provision due to the impact of Covid-19 on international travel. As we are moving away from the Covid-impacted period for the data collection window, we will review the potential inclusion of this metric in the next edition of the ranking.

Q. How many institutions participated in the "Study Abroad" part of the last WUR submission? I would love to have a sense of how informative our rank in that metric is compared to the rest of the metrics.

A. Almost all universities who submitted data to the World University Rankings have also provided data for the number of exchange students.



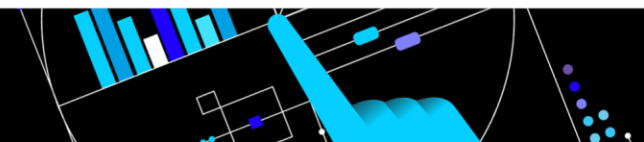
Q&A

Q. When does THE use the term "Ranking" as opposed to "Rankings?" We're trying to be consistent on our end and find this confusing.

A. 'Rankings' is used in the title of all the official ones. So if we're using the full title we tend to use 'Rankings'. But if not we would say ranking, if we are just referring to a single table.

Q. How can a graduate Business School (part of a university) submit its own data? Does data submission have to be done through central campus when they submit their undergrad?

A. A graduate Business School that is part of a university can choose to submit its data separately from the central campus, provided there is an agreement with the main university. If the decision is made to report independently, the data submission for the main campus must not include the data of the Business School to avoid double-counting. The Business School would need to coordinate with the main campus to ensure that both entities are in agreement regarding the separate reporting. Once this is settled, the Business School can proceed to submit its data through the designated online portal, following the same submission process as other institutions. It's important to note that all submissions must adhere to the guidelines and deadlines provided by the ranking organization. However, it may not necessarily be a strategic decision to submit data separately from the main campus, as currently the WUR does not rank graduate-only entities.



Q&A

Q. Can you please share how you determine who will receive an invitation to participate in the academic survey?

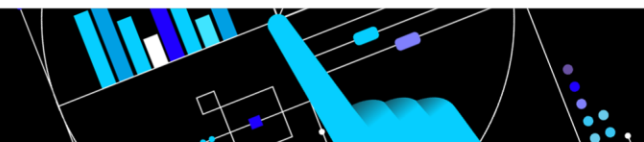
A. Invitations to participate in the academic survey are sent to individuals who meet specific criteria. The recipients are experienced, published scholars who have been actively publishing in recent years and have at least one citation in an academic paper. These academics are selected from a comprehensive in-house academic contact database that contains verified contacts of 3.4 million academics. The database is regularly updated, and invitations are only sent to email addresses that have been verified within the last six months. The selection process ensures that the survey responses are completed by active, cited academics to maintain the integrity and quality of the survey results.

Q. Are we seeing more of these behaviors from smaller or larger institutions?

A. We do not have the specific information to determine whether smaller or larger institutions exhibit certain behaviors more frequently.

Q. What are the super brands for the US?

A. Super brands in the United States would be the universities ranking very highly in our global reputation ranking. Please consult <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/reputation-ranking> for more information.



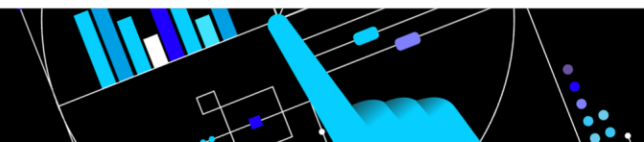
Q&A

Q. With the National level weighting of survey results, (using UNESCO data) how do to account for differences in subject mix. For example, a developing country will typically have lots of scholars in Engineering and Technology but very few in other subjects. So if you are only taking into account the total number of scholars in a country (without considering subject) you are significantly over compensating for those countries, because the national baseline is artificially low.

A. The weighting of survey results at the national level indeed uses UNESCO data to ensure a representative distribution of academics globally. However, to account for differences in subject mix, the process involves scaling by subject as well as by country. This means that the distribution of participants in the global reputation survey is adjusted to reflect the actual distribution of researchers worldwide by subject, according to UNESCO data. If a country has a higher proportion of scholars in Engineering and Technology compared to other subjects, the weight of votes from these scholars is scaled to match the global distribution. This method prevents overcompensation for countries with a skewed subject mix and ensures that the survey results are balanced and accurately reflect the diversity of academic disciplines across different regions.

Q. Is the pairwise comparison new for 2025?

A. We already had the pairwise comparison section in the global academic reputation survey last year; however, it was not used in the calculation of the reputation scores featured in the World University Rankings.



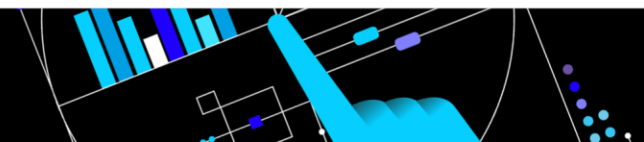
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Q. Weight on responses coming from China: thank you for the presentation first. You mentioned earlier that responses from China are given more weights as you believe not all of them will receive the emails. How do you determine the actual 'extra weight' of responses from China every year? Ho do you ensure fairness? Thank you!

A. The weighting of survey responses, including those from China, is determined using publicly available data from UNESCO, which provides a distribution of scholars across the world. This ensures that the votes are reflective of the global distribution of academics. The process involves adjusting the weight of votes from areas with lower response rates to prevent them from being unfairly penalized. The exact 'extra weight' applied to responses from China or any other region is calculated based on the difference between the actual distribution of survey participants and the UNESCO distribution of researchers. This method aims to maintain fairness and representativeness in the survey results.



Q&A

Q. For the patents are you using individual patents, or patent families?

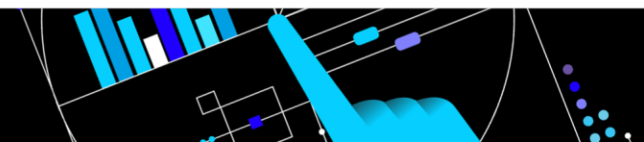
A. We use the patent families.

Q. Has THE considered increasing the number of subjects it ranks, like QS or Shanghai do?

A. There are no immediate plans to increase the number of subjects it ranks in the World University Rankings. If we were to publish more granular subjects, we would announce it through the usual channels.

Q. For the bibliometric analysis with the data you get from Elsevier, what if an article is associated with a school within the university hence a child listing code but does not have the university code. In your analysis, will it still be associated with the university. Are you provided with all the child listings for each university?

A. In bibliometric analysis, it is crucial that all affiliations related to a university, including its schools and departments, are accurately mapped to ensure that publications are correctly attributed to the university. If an article is associated with a school within a university and has a specific child listing code but does not have the main university code, it should still be associated with the university as long as the child listing is correctly identified as part of the university in the data provided by Elsevier. If there are any discrepancies or missing affiliations, the university should work with Elsevier to update the information. Usually Elsevier is excellent at keeping abreast of any institutional changes.



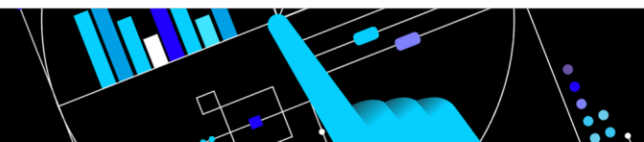
Q&A

Q. Given the changes in your research quality measures; will you be moving further away from the citation impact even more?

A. The changes in the research quality measures for the World University Rankings 2023 reflect a shift in how research impact is assessed, but they do not indicate a move away from considering citation impact altogether. Instead, the previous citation impact metric has been refined and divided into three distinct metrics: research strength, research excellence, and research influence, each accounting for 10% of the overall ranking.

Research strength focuses on the 75th percentile of the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) to provide a more balanced view of an institution's research quality that is less susceptible to outliers. Research excellence measures the proportion of an institution's publications that fall within the top 10% by FWCI, normalized by the size of the institution. Research influence employs an iterative method, similar to PageRank, to evaluate the significance of citations based on the importance of the citing papers.

These changes aim to provide a more robust and nuanced understanding of research quality, rather than moving away from citation impact. The emphasis is on capturing a broader spectrum of research impact, considering both the quality and influence of research outputs.



Q&A

Q. What is your data source when analyzing patents?

A. The data source used for analyzing patents is Elsevier. Patents are sourced primarily from the World Intellectual Property Organisation, the European Patent Office, and the patent offices of the US, the UK, and Japan. A change for this year: the existing list of the 5 patent offices was extended this year to 107 offices of which 43 actually cite research found in Scopus. These patents are those that cite research from a university and are included in the Elsevier Scopus dataset.

Q. To control for country population, has THE considered a compromise between using the log of the population size and the actual population size? Log seems like it would have a limited effect.

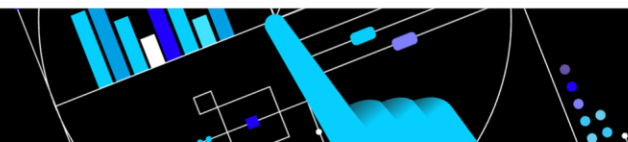
A. We thank you for the feedback and will pass on the information to our data science team for review.

Q. Hello! would you please confirm which countries are included in North America? is Mexico included? Thanks!

A. Yes, in our region analysis, North America typically includes Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

Q. Will the number of exchange students be weighted in the 2026 WUR?

A. The study abroad metric – assessing the provision of international learning opportunities for domestic students – is currently given a weight of 0%. The zero weight is a temporary provision due to the impact of Covid-19 on international travel. As we are moving away from the Covid-impacted period for the data collection window, we will review the potential inclusion of this metric in the next edition of the ranking.



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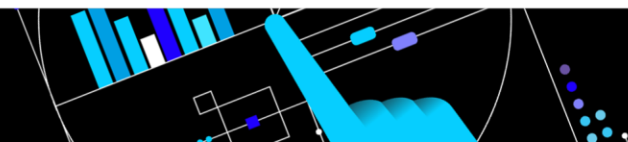
Q. It seems unfair that a university that gets relatively few votes is held to same 10% self-vote limit. Easier to go over >10% if you only get 20 votes than if you get 200

A. We understand your concern regarding the self-voting cap in the reputation survey. It's important to note that while the 10% self-voting cap is applied uniformly, it is designed to prevent any institution from disproportionately influencing its own ranking through self-votes. For universities receiving fewer votes, the cap ensures that a small number of self-votes do not unduly skew the results. The methodology aims to balance the influence of self-voting while still allowing all institutions to participate in the survey.

Q. Noticing that law is not ranked very often, I have heard from my faculty of Law that Elsevier doesn't accept most of the journals that they publish in. Would you consider working with Elsevier to expand the law journals they index?

A. Firstly, you can communicate with Elsevier regarding the inclusion of more law journals in their Scopus database. Elsevier has a Content Selection and Advisory Board (CSAB) that is responsible for the selection of journals to be indexed. You can suggest journals for coverage through their suggestion platform, and if the journals meet the selection criteria, they may be considered for inclusion.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to check the current list of indexed journals in the Scopus database to ensure that the law journals in question are not already included - see the list of journals at <https://www.elsevier.com/en-gb/products/scopus/content>. If they are not, gathering support from other institutions and demonstrating the academic value and quality of these journals could strengthen the case for their inclusion.



Q&A

Q. Why the reputation indicators (research and teaching) have the lowest scores compared with other indicators?

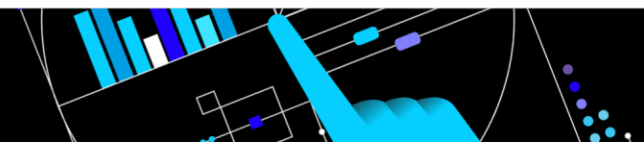
A. This is because Teaching Reputation (and Research Reputation as well) have a distribution of the data very different from the rest of the metrics. There are a few universities with many votes, and a long 'tail' of universities with much fewer votes. This is something we are trying to address by introducing pairwise comparison mechanisms in the survey.

Q. could you please supply indicator and subindicator score for every university in the ~2000 ranked so we can validate our performance-- even if only in DataPoints

A. We invite you to contact data@timeshighereducation.com for further information on more detailed data benchmarking tools.

Q. Can you supply all the weighting information so we can validate your calculations?

A. Please see more information on the indicator weightings in our methodology page:
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/world-university-rankings-2025-methodology>



Q&A

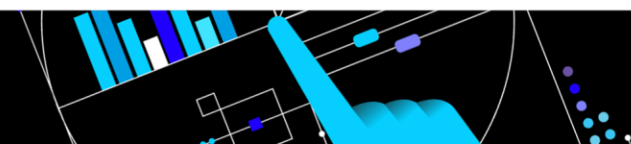
Q. Study abroad: the number of Canadian students that study overseas (exchange or any other types of mobility) is traditionally much lower than Europe and parts of Asia (just imagine a French student can just to the Netherlands for international exchange, and for us the US is the only country that is near). I wonder if a different weighting will be applied to address the natural difference or unfairness just because of the geographic location of Canada. Thx!

A. Large countries have been disadvantaged compared to small countries in our international metrics, in that it is “easier” for staff and students in small countries to work or study abroad. We have already taken steps to address this issue, and this has led us to change our normalisation approach for the three International Outlook measures in 2023, henceforth taking into consideration the population of a country when evaluating these metrics.

Q. Please comment on apparent nearly perfect correlation of teaching and research reputation. Doesn't ring true.

A. The perception of a nearly perfect correlation between teaching and research reputation may not accurately reflect the complexities of academic institutions. While there can be a positive relationship between the two, as universities with strong research capabilities may attract faculty who are leaders in their fields and can offer high-quality teaching, it is not a given that this correlation is perfect. Various factors contribute to a university's reputation in teaching and research independently.

Teaching reputation is influenced by the quality of the educational experience, including pedagogical methods, student engagement, and graduate outcomes. Research reputation, on the other hand, is often gauged by the impact of the institution's scholarly work, publication rates, and citations in academic literature. It is possible for a university to excel in research while having room for improvement in teaching, or vice versa.



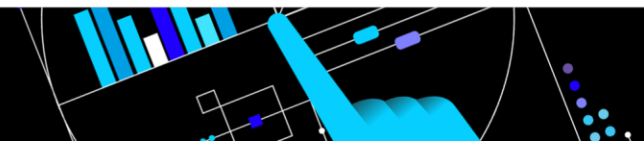
Q&A

Q. Does THE send an invitation for the reputation survey each year to all 11.4 million of the academics in its database? If not, how does it choose which to invite?

A. THE selects respondents based on specific criteria to ensure that the survey is completed by active, cited academics. The selection process involves choosing academics who have actively published in recent years and have at least one citation in an academic paper. These individuals are chosen from THE's in-house academic contact database, which contains 3.4 million verified academic contacts. Regular verification of these contacts is conducted, and invitations are sent only to emails that have been verified within the last six months. This approach helps maintain the quality and relevance of the survey responses.

Q. If an author has multiple affiliations that are listed in a paper, to which of their institutional affiliation will the publication be credited?

A. When an author lists multiple affiliations in a paper, the publication is credited to each of the institutions mentioned. There is no dilution of credit for any of the institutions; each one receives full recognition for the publication. This means that if an author is affiliated with both University A and University B and includes both affiliations in the publication, both universities will count the publication as part of their scholarly output. The order in which the affiliations are listed does not affect the credit given; all affiliated institutions are attributed the publication equally. The only exception is for publications with more than 1,000 authors, for which we use the kilo-authored paper taper.



Thank you

