Professor Richard C. Larson of Blended Learning Open Source Science or Math Initiative, MIT at a seminar in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

RANKINGS

QS ranks MIT the world's No. 1 university

MASSACHUSETTS Institute of Technology (MIT) is the world's best university for a record-breaking seventh consecutive year ahead of three other universities in the United States, Stanford, Harvard and California Institute of Technology, whose ranks were also unchanged.

The 15th edition of the QS World University Rankings, released recently by global higher education analysts QS Quacquarelli Symonds, sees MIT hold outright the record it previously shared with Harvard University.

The United Kingdom's top institution has changed for the first time since 2004, with the University of Oxford (fifth) usurping its long-time rival, the University of Cambridge (sixth). Imperial College London remained at seventh overall. University College London remained in the top 10 but was overtaken by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and the University of Chicago.

Both UK and US universities record more improvements than drops, representing stabilisation for both sectors after recent regressions.

The National University of Singapore (NUS) has risen to become the world's 11th-best university and regain its status as Asia's best

"MIT is the world's best university for a record-breaking seventh consecutive year."

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2019: TOP 10

2019	2018	Institution Name	Location
1	1	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
2	2	Stanford University	United States
3	3	Harvard University	United States
4	4	California Institute of Technology	United States
5	6	University of Oxford	United Kingdom
6	5	University of Cambridge	United Kingdom
7	10	ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology)	Switzerland
8	8	Imperial College London	United Kingdom
9	9	University of Chicago	United States
10	7	University College London	United Kingdom

Source: QS Quacquarelli Symonds 2004-2019 https://www.topuniversities.com/

INFOGRAPHICS **NST**

university.

China achieves its first top-20 position in the QS World University Ranking since 2006: Tsinghua University places 17th.

Both Malaysia and Russia record consistent, noteworthy improvements.

QS ranks the world's 1000 best universities, which come from 85 different countries. More than 65 million stakeholders will view the rankings at http://www.TopUniversities.com this year.

Maszlee Malik (first row, fourth from left) with university representatives at the announcement of the 15th edition of the QS World University Rankings in Putrajaya. BERNAMA PIC

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

UM breaks into top 100

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THE 15th edition of the QS World University Rankings, released recently by global higher education analysts QS Quacquarelli Symonds, sees University of Malaya (UM) achieving its highest rank since the first edition of the rankings in 2004. It now ranks 87th in the world from 114th last year.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) (184th) joins the world's Top 200, an achievement only narrowly missed by Universiti Putra Malaysia (202th).

Two other varsities which made it to the top 200 are Universiti Sains Malaysia which rises to 207th position from 264th and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, which jumps to 228th from 253rd in the world.

At the Press conference to announce the rankings, Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik said university rankings have a role to play for tertiary institutions.

"The QS World University Rankings, in particular, provide a reference point for students and universities from all over the world to see whether they are on track with their counterparts across the globe.

"Credit must be given to the hard work of university academics and administrators who have brought our universities closer to the pulse of the Fourth Industrial Revolution."

UM vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Abdul Rahim Hashim attributed its success to the commitment of all the staff and their dedication to achieving the goals set in the university's strategic plan to strengthen its fundamentals particularly in teaching, research and international collaboration. He added that the work done in the past years has laid a strong foundation that paved the way to the top 100.

"UM's assiduous efforts in strengthening research, internationalisation as well as industry engagement over the past few years are now yielding positive results.

> 66 *UM's assiduous efforts in strengthening research, internationalisation as well as industry engagement... are now yielding positive results.*
>
> **ABDUL RAHIM HASHIM**
> UM vice-chancellor

"These represent global acknowledgement and recognition of UM's quality in teaching and research."

Three indicators, namely Academic Reputation, Employer Reputation and Citations Per Faculty, leapfrogged the university into the top 100. The first two are indicators of the university's reputation among the academic community and employers respectively, and the third measures the impact of its publications.

However, the results this year saw a continuous drop in the ranking of the international staff indicator.

"The cut in the government's allocation to the university had adverse implications on its international staff intake and ability to retain productive retired academics on contract. The university's efforts towards financial sustainability will not yield immediate results to bridge the shortfall due to the drop in government funding."

However, UM will continue its primary focus on establishing stronger academic fundamentals. Only through such efforts, said Abdul Rahim, can the university maintain or better its ranking in the coming years. Intensification of international collaborations and enhancing research and industry partnerships are among its top priority.

Ben Sowter, research director at QS, said: "Malaysia shines in this edition of the rankings. Its higher education system has a solid reputation among both international academics and employers. To support this positive ascending trajectory, local universities should continue to focus on increasing the impact of the research they produce."

The better ranking can be attributed to improved scores in Academic Reputation and Employer Reputation which account for 50 per cent of the overall score.

For UKM, the rise in rankings is a perfect gift for the institution's 50th anniversary.

UKM vice-chancellor Professor Tan Sri Dr Noor Azlan Ghazali said: "UKM's achievement does not only reflect its excellence in an overall context but specifically in its contribution to the goals of national development and enhancement of the societal well-being of the local and global community."

UKM is now within the one per cent category of top universities in the world.

UPM vice-chancellor Professor Datin Paduka Datuk Dr Aini Ideris said the institution is within its target based on the 2014-202 UPM Strategic Plan to be among the world's top 200 universities by 2020.

"We hope to improve several indicators through strategies in increasing the number of international lecturers and improving academic and student quality."

UPM jumped 27 places and is now in the 20 per cent category of best universities among the 1,233 evaluated by QS.

USM has moved up 148 places within the past six years: from 355 in year 2013/14 to 207 in year 2018/19.

Its vice-chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Asma Ismail said: "We have been rising steadily since 2014 by concentrating on the fundamentals and we have improved further because we realise the importance of providing the best possible learning experience for the global community."

USM's Academic Reputation was ranked among the Top 200 in the world while Employer Reputation and Faculty Student ratio were within the Top 250 in the world.

"USM has always been in the position to view ranking as one of the gauging parameters, rather than be obsessed with it. We are happy with our overall performance, we know that we are on the right track and we have good strategies in place to ensure that USM remains as the preferred university to its stakeholders."

There are also four new Malaysian universities in this year's rankings. They are UCSI University, Taylor's University, Universiti Tenaga Nasional and Multimedia University.

Ranked 481, UCSI is the only Malaysian private university in the top 500. This is also the first time it is featured in the QS World University Rankings.

UCSI vice-chancellor and president Senior Professor Datuk Dr Khalid Yusoff said that its continued rise in global stature was a culmination of university-wide push for excellence and performance with specific strategies to reach out and reach in, a commitment to synergise with the future for its students and staff, and the dedication and hard work of its staff and students in pursuing these ideals and aspirations.

"We welcome this development as it shows we are moving in the right direction," he said.

"Our focus is to push UCSI further and higher. We are building the strengths of the university. Quality education is our priority and we want to be a standard bearer of thought leadership."

Khalid added that UCSI's position in the rankings showed that Malaysian universities can achieve marked improvement.

Over the years, UCSI has focused extensively on improving its research output, curriculum development and delivery, as well as industry partnerships. UCSI also works closely with the great universities around the world while partnering with newer tertiary institutions in the region.

It has elevated its engagement with the world's best universities. UCSI students are annually selected by Harvard University, Imperial College London, University of Chicago, Tsinghua University and the University of Queensland for involvement in their various research programmes.

Additionally, the University of Melbourne has arrangements for UCSI's third-year medical students to pursue the Bachelor of Medical Sciences (Melb.) programme after one year of studies in Melbourne, indicating that Melbourne University recognises the three years of UCSI's medicine programme.

All the Malaysian universities ranked rise in the Academic Reputation and Employer Reputation metrics. Seven out of the nine universities ranked last year improve in the Faculty/Student Ratio indicator while only five do better than last year in the Citation Per Faculty indicator, which measures research impact. UM (399th) leads in the country while the other universities rank below the Top 550 in this key indicator. Half of the Malaysian universities rise in the International Students metric while in the International Faculty indicator, five drops and four rises.

MALAYSIAN RANKED UNIVERSITIES 2019

2019	2018	Institution
87=	114=	Universiti Malaya
184=	230=	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
202	229	Universiti Putra Malaysia
207	264=	Universiti Sains Malaysia
228	253	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
481=		UCSI University
521-530	601-650	Universiti Teknologi Petronas
601-650		Taylor's University
601-650	701-750	Universiti Utara Malaysia
651-700	701-750	International Islamic University Malaysia
701-750		Universiti Tenaga Nasional
751-800	751-800	Universiti Teknologi MARA
801-1000		Multimedia University

Source: QS Quacquarelli Symonds 2004-2019 https://www.topuniversities.com