QS World University Rankings
- An Overview & Facts -

Baerbel Eckelmann
Research Manager
Stellenbosch, November 2011
THAT’S ME

- Born in Salzfurtkapelle
- Joined QS in 2007
- QSIU’s Research Manager
- Took on responsibility for data & knowledge management of the QS WUR
- Travel to various parts of the world to talk to university representatives to maximize data outputs in terms of quality & quantity
- If not working …
LOCATION
World’s leading higher education events provider – 215 events in 2010 in 45 countries
- QS Top Universities Tour
- QS World of Study
- QS World MBA Tour
- QS World Grad School Tour
- QS APPLE Conference

World leading information and student recruitment sites:
- www.topuniversities.com
- www.topgradschool.com
- www.topmba.com
- www.top-executive.com
- www.moveonnet.eu
QS - QUICK FACTS

- Approximately 150 staff from the four corners of the world
- Over 800 current university and business school clients
- Over 4.5 million web visitors
- Principal offices in London, Paris & Singapore
- Associates in Stuttgart, Shanghai, Boston, Johannesburg, Beijing, Sydney and Washington DC
To ENABLE motivated people around the world to achieve their POTENTIAL by fostering international MOBILITY, educational ACHIEVEMENT and career DEVELOPMENT.
RANKINGS CHALLENGES

Are there any
RANKINGS CHALLENGES

- Having a clear purpose
- Recognizing diversity

Purpose
Recognize universities as the multi-faceted organizations that they are and to provide a global comparison of their success against the notional mission of remaining or becoming world-class.
WHY WORLD RANKINGS?

- Higher education becoming more global
- Knowledge the key driver of international competitiveness
- Increasing desire for comparative information
- Unique position of QS as international and independent experts in higher education
- Raises awareness of all 500+ universities involved in the project

Inspiring institutions to pursue performance evaluation will lead to performance enhancement
I imagine that all university heads broadly share my own view of these [league] tables. They are terrific and unquestioned when you score well and better than last time. They are fatally flawed and fundamentally unfair when you move in the opposite direction.

Howard Davies
Former Director, London School of Economics
Are there more
RANKINGS CHALLENGES

- Having a clear purpose
- Starting with a good list
- Identifying relevant indicators
- Defining a strong, yet practical methodology
- Clear and transparent explanation of methodology
- Specifying data definitions
- Collecting complete and accurate data
- Clear and transparent publication of results
- Recognizing diversity
What would you imagine if ever asked to visualize a ranking?
A bridge is a structure that provides connection between two or more different things, it provides a way over difficulty.

The design of the bridge varies depending on the function, nature of the terrain, material used and funds available.

The quality of the bridge is judged by its efficiency or failures and it is the bridge’s tradition and the people involved that make it special.

Our bridge
The rankings are a bridge between students, parents, employers, governments, policy makers, research funders and universities themselves.
OUR APPROACH

Research Quality

Teaching Quality

World Class University?

Graduate Employability

International Outlook
### 2011 Overall Picture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>200</th>
<th>300</th>
<th>400</th>
<th>500</th>
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<td>East Asia</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Asia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Europe</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>US &amp; Canada</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2011 OVERALL PICTURE

- Nearly 3000 institutions considered
- Number of institutions evaluated increased by approximately 8%
- Number of countries represented in Top 500 climbed from 45 to 50, representing 13 regions
- Overall stability gradually improves:
  
  average shift in position amongst the Top 50 was 2.8 (3.3), amongst the Top 100 5.9 (7.2) and amongst the Top 200 11.0 (11.9)
2011 HIGHLIGHTS

- **33,744** academic respondents
- **16,785** employer respondents
- **712** institutions ranked
- **61** countries overall
- **32** countries in top 200
- **18m** students at ranked institutions
- **7m** self-citations excluded

- Avg change in position:
  - Top 100 – **5.9** places
  - Top 200 – **11.0** places
- Top **100** an average of **7** years younger
- **5.8%** growth in international students at top **200**
- Fees information collected from over **560** institutions
### Comparing Methodologies

#### ARWU (2003)
- Alumni Awards
- Faculty Awards
- HiCis
- Nature & Science
- SCI/SSCI Articles
- Size

#### QS (2004)
- Academic Reputation
- Employer Reputation
- Faculty Student
- International Faculty
- International Students
- Citations per Faculty

#### Webometrics (2007)
- Size
- Rich Files
- Scholar
- Visibility

#### HEEACT (2007)
- Articles (11 yrs)
- Articles (1 yr)
- Citations (11 yrs)
- Citations (2 yrs)
- Citations / Yr
- H-index
- HiCi Papers
- Top Journals
- Subjects

#### THE (2010)
- Teaching Reputation
- Citations
- International Staff
- PhDs per academic
- Public research income
- Undergrads per academic
- Income per academic
- PhDs/Bachelors
- Research reputation
- Papers per academic
- Research income
- International Students
- Industry income

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## Comparing Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARWU</th>
<th>QS</th>
<th>Webometrics</th>
<th>HEEACT</th>
<th>THE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>Johns Hopkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>Yale</td>
<td>Cornell</td>
<td>Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Caltech</td>
<td>Imperial</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>UCL</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>MIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>U Penn</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>U Penn</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


RECOGNIZING DIVERSITY

Focus
Top institution with main focus on Arts or Social Sciences

Language
Non-English speaking institutions in Top 100

Geography
Number of countries represented in Top 50
In response to Berlin Principle #3

- Recognize the diversity of institutions and take the different missions and goals of institutions into account. Quality measures for research-oriented institutions, for example, are quite different from those that are appropriate for institutions that provide broad access to underserved communities. Institutions that are being ranked and the experts that inform the ranking process should be consulted often.

- A simple contextual reference to other evaluation results, categorising institutions by subject spread size and research level

- Users can thus understand their position relative to like institutions
QS CLASSIFICATIONS

- to address comparing “apples with oranges” observation

- both aim to teach students and produce research

- classifications help the user distinguish the apples from the oranges

- classifications take into account four key aspects of each university: size, subject range, research intensity, age
# QS Classifications

## Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| XL   | Very Large  
\( \geq 30,000 \) Students |
| L    | Large       
\( \geq 12,000 \) Students |
| M    | Medium      
\( \geq 5,000 \) Students |
| S    | Small       
\( < 5,000 \) Students |

## Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| FC    | Fully Comprehensive 
All 5 faculty areas + medical school |
| CO    | Comprehensive 
All 5 faculty areas |
| FO    | Focused 
> 2 faculty areas |
| SP    | Specialist 
\( \leq 2 \) faculty areas |

## Research Intensity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| VH        | Very High  
Threshold relative to size and focus |
| HI        | High       
Threshold relative to size and focus |
| MD        | Moderate   
Threshold relative to size and focus |
| LO        | Limited or None 
Threshold relative to size and focus |

## Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>( \geq 100 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>&lt; 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>&lt; 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>&lt; 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Over the years I have come to believe that QS are trying very hard to provide a credible global university ranking system that we in academia can look up to..... I truly believe that a global ranking accompanied by national data will be meaningful for its contextual relevance to the local higher education system. I hope that can become a reality.”

Prof Tan Sri Dato’ Dr Sharifah Hapsah Hasan Shahabudin, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
World Rankings may not be everything