

MEDIA RELEASE

UP delivers strong performance in QS subject rankings yet again

The University of Pretoria (UP) has again grown its share of subjects considered to be among the best at universities in South Africa and the rest of the world. Altogether, 21 subjects offered at UP have been ranked in the 2023 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World Rankings by Subject. This is an increase from 20 in 2022 and 18 in 2021.

This enhanced recognition is despite growth in the number of universities included in the 2023 QS subject rankings which were released last week, covering 54 disciplines offered at 1 597 institutions (1 543 in 2022) around the world.

Of the 21 disciplines in which UP was ranked this year, eight are rated first in South Africa, up from five top-rated disciplines in 2022.

Two UP subjects – Mineral and Mining Engineering – are again among the top 60 worldwide. They are in 35th position worldwide and second in South Africa. Veterinary Science, which is in the 51-60 global band, is first in South Africa for the second consecutive year.

Other UP subjects with high global rankings are Accounting and Finance, Agriculture and Forestry, Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies, and Law.

Meanwhile, three subjects included in the QS rankings for the first time in 2023 have moved straight into favourable domestic ranking positions. These are Materials Science (third in South Africa), Natural Sciences (fourth) and Physics and Astronomy (seventh).

For the 2023 rankings, QS grouped the 54 disciplines analysed into five broad subject areas: Arts and Humanities; Engineering and Technology; Life Sciences and Medicine; Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences and Management.

It then used five broad metrics to rank the universities. These are Academic Reputation; Employer Reputation; Research Citations per Paper; H-Index, and International Research Network (IRN).

UP's achievement in the global and domestic arenas are as follows:

Improvements – broad subject areas – (2023 global rank):

UP improved its position in all five broad subject areas compared to 2022. The rate of improvement is the best of all the ranked domestic institutions:

- Arts and Humanities (341, by more than 60 positions)
- Engineering and Technology (284, up by 68 positions)
- Life Sciences and Medicine (325, up by 12 positions)
- Natural Sciences (451-500, ranked for the first time)
- Social Sciences and Management (283, up by 40 positions)

Improvements – (global rank):

- Biological Sciences (Top 350)
- Environmental Sciences (Top 300)
- Mathematics (Top 450)

Improvements (domestic rank):

- Chemical Engineering (1st in 2023 from 2nd in 2022)
- Biological Sciences (2nd in 2023 from 3rd in 2022)
- Chemistry (5th in 2023 from 6th in 2022)
- Environmental Sciences (3rd in 2023 from 4th in 2022)
- Mathematics (1st in 2023 from 2nd in 2022)
- Law (1st in 2023 from 2nd in 2022)

Ranked for the first time (global and domestic rank):

- Natural Sciences (Top 500 in the world and number 4 in SA)
- Materials Science (Top 450 in the world and number 3 in SA)
- Physics and Astronomy (Top 650 in the world and number 7 in SA)

Ranked first in South Africa (global rank):

- Veterinary Science (51-60)
- Accounting and Finance (101-150)
- Law (151-200)
- Economics and Econometrics (251-300)
- Mechanical Engineering (301-350)
- Electrical and Electronic Engineering (351-400)
- Chemical Engineering (501-550)
- Mathematics (401-450)

Ranked second in South Africa (global rank):

- Mineral and Mining Engineering (35)
- Theology, Divinity, and Religious Studies (101-130)
- Agriculture and Forestry (101-150)
- Architecture/ Built Environment (201-240)
- Engineering and Technology (284)
- Social Sciences and Management (283)
- Biological Sciences (301-350)
- Education (301-350)
- Computer Science and Information System (501-550)

Ranked third in South Africa (global rank):

- Environmental Sciences (251-300)
- Materials Science (401-420)

Ranked fourth in South Africa (global rank):

- Medicine (351-400)

Professor Tawana Kupe, UP's Vice-Chancellor and Principal, said although there is some degree of subjectivity in all university rankings, subject rankings are considered particularly relevant as they can assist in decisions as to where and what to study.

"Knowledge knows no borders, and the latest QS subject rankings help to position the University of Pretoria as a globally competitive university, rooted in Africa. These rankings reflect the high quality of UP's academic staff, 70% of whom hold PhDs," he said.

"Further enhancing the academic strengths of the University is the growing number of postgraduate students choosing to make UP their academic home."

Currently, postgraduate students make up approximately 30% of UP enrolments, and this is projected to increase to 35% by 2025.

"Over and above our high-quality educational offerings, the University has very fine facilities and a commitment to being human-centric and making an impact in all that we do, making UP welcoming as well as academically excellent," Prof Kupe said.

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Media enquiries

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on the Hatfield Campus, Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also the largest producer of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). It is the only University in the country with a Faculty of Veterinary Science, ranked top in Africa. Overall has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 55 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes.

UP is one of the top five universities in South Africa, according to the 2019-2020 rankings by the Centre for World University Rankings. It is ranked among the top 100 universities worldwide in three fields of study (veterinary science, theology, and law) and the top 1% in eight fields of study (agricultural sciences, clinical medicine, engineering, environment/ecology, immunology, microbiology, plant and animal sciences and social sciences).

In May 2020, the annual UK Financial Times Executive Education Rankings again ranked GIBS as the top South African and African business school. The University also has an extensive community engagement programme with approximately 33 000 students involved in community upliftment. Furthermore, UP is building considerable capacities and strengths for the Fourth Industrial Revolution by preparing students for the world beyond University and offering work-readiness and entrepreneurship training.

For more information, go to www.up.ac.za