

## NEWS RELEASE

### Rooted in Africa, leading the future



*UP students in the Graduate Centre on the University's Hatfield campus.*

PRETORIA – UP has excelled in the Times Higher Education Sub-Saharan Africa University Rankings 2024. “This underscores UP’s role in Africa and demonstrates its commitment to addressing the continent’s challenges through impactful research, innovation and inclusivity,” said VC and Principal Prof Francis Petersen.

The University of Pretoria (UP) has excelled in the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) Sub-Saharan Africa Rankings 2024](#), securing the number two spot in Africa and South Africa, having moved up two places from its 2023 position. This particular ranking was initiated last year to address the specific challenges faced by higher education institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. The second edition, which was released on 27 November, ranked 129 universities (88 in 2023) in 22 countries (20 in 2023).

“Congratulations to the entire UP community on this great achievement,” said Professor Francis Petersen, UP’s Vice-Chancellor and Principal. “This achievement underscores UP’s pivotal role in Africa and demonstrates its

commitment to addressing the continent's unique challenges through impactful research, innovation and inclusivity. By focusing on African collaboration, heritage and sustainable solutions, UP contributes to sustainable development while staying rooted in its African identity, positioning itself as a leader in driving progress and shaping the future of higher education in the region."

The ranking follows a hybrid [methodology](#) to account for the diverse strengths of the sector. The methodology has 20 metrics, encompassing five essential areas: Resources and Finances; Access and Fairness; Ethical Leadership; Student Engagement; and Africa Impact. This year, a total of 171 universities participated in the data collection; of those, only 129 received the requisite number of student survey responses to be ranked.

UP demonstrated strong performance both in Africa and South Africa in resources and finance, continuous professional development, high-quality education, financial aid for low-income students, support for first-generation students, employability, ethical leadership skills such as fostering innovation, and entrepreneurial skills. The University also stood out in the Africa Impact category, which highlights its role in advancing African scholarship through high-impact research citations, collaborative co-authorships and the celebration of African heritage.

Based on the feedback from students, UP has excelled in practical courses, experiential learning and soft skills development, thereby creating a robust foundation for students to thrive in a rapidly changing job market. Through innovative teaching methods and real-world applications, UP equips students with critical thinking, adaptability and effective communication skills. The integration of leadership development into curricula ensures that graduates possess the vision and resilience needed to navigate challenges in the age of artificial intelligence and the future of work. These skills are vital as artificial intelligence reshapes industries, which require professionals who can balance technical proficiency with human-centred insights.

"One of the unique components of this ranking is the inclusion of the student survey, which incorporates the student voice in evaluating and assessing university performance," Prof Petersen said. "This reflects the principles of ubuntu, emphasising the interconnectedness and importance of community, where students are seen as vital contributors to the growth and improvement of the institution. This highlights UP's student-centric approach in valuing student feedback as a critical component of its institutional performance and strategy."

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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 its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers 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, which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2024 Times Higher Education subject rankings placed UP first in South Africa in the fields of Law, Veterinary Science, Accounting and Finance; Agriculture and Forestry and Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) ranked the University among the top five in Africa, as part of their 2024 World University Rankings (WUR). UP was the only South African university featured in the 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), falling within in the 101-200 range of innovative universities.

For more information, please go to [www.up.ac.za](http://www.up.ac.za)