## 2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings

### SUMMARY

- McMaster University ranked 72nd overall. This is an increase of five positions from 2019, making it the best rank for the institution since 2012.
- McMaster is the second highest ranked university in Ontario and the fourth highest ranked university in Canada.

### BACKGROUND

The Times Higher Education World University Rankings is an annual ranking of the world's top universities. To assess and rank each institution, Times Higher Education uses 13 performance indicators, grouped into five "Pillar" areas:

**1. Teaching (30%)**
- Teaching reputation survey (15%)
- Students to academic staff (4.5%)
- Doctoral degrees by academic staff (6%)
- Doctoral degrees by bachelor degrees (2.25%)
- Institutional income per academic staff member (2.25%)

**2. Research (30%)**
- Research reputation survey (18%)
- Research income per academic staff member (6%)
- Papers by academic staff (6%)

**3. Citations (30%)**

**4. Industry income (2.5%)**
- Research Income from Industry per academic staff member

**5. International Outlook (7.5%)**
- % international students (2.5%)
- % international academic staff (2.5%)
- % publications with an international co-author (2.5%)

### CURRENT STATUS

On September 11, 2019, Times Higher Education released the 2020 edition of the World University Rankings (WUR). Overall, McMaster ranked 72nd. This is an increase of five positions compared to last year's edition and stands as the best the University has ranked since the 2012 administration of the Ranking.

McMaster is the second highest ranked university in Ontario, and the fourth highest ranked university in Canada, behind only the University of Toronto (18), the University of British Columbia (34), and McGill University (42).

In the 2020 WUR, seven Canadian universities are ranked in the top 200. This is a decrease from 2019, where nine were ranked (Calgary and Western are now ranked 201-250). Table 1 provides an overview of the Canadian universities that were ranked among the world's top 200 institutions in 2020, and for comparison their 2019 information. Table 2 provides a breakdown of McMaster's 2020 WUR scores compared to the previous year.

**Table 1: Top Ranked Canadian Universities, 2019 vs. 2020**

| | 2019 | | | 2020 | | | Δ | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total Score | Rank Can. | World | Total Score | Rank Can. | World | Total Score | Rank Can. | World |
| Toronto | 83.9 | 1 | 21 | 85.5 | 1 | 18 | 1.6 | N/C | 3 |
| UBC | 76.0 | 2 | 37 | 76.3 | 2 | 34 | 0.3 | N/C | 3 |
| McGill | 73.7 | 3 | 44 | 74.3 | 3 | 42 | 0.6 | N/C | 2 |
| **McMaster** | **64.3** | **4** | **77** | **65.4** | **4** | **72** | **1.1** | **N/C** | **5** |
| Montreal | 63.0 | 5 | 90 | 63.4 | 5 | 85 | 0.4 | N/C | 5 |
| Alberta | 58.6 | 6 | 132 | 58.2 | 6 | 136 | -0.4 | N/C | -4 |
| Ottawa | 54.9 | 7 | 176 | 57.9 | 7 | 141 | 3.0 | N/C | 35 |

N/C = No Change

**Table 2: McMaster's THE WUR Score by Weighted Measure, 2019 vs. 2020**

| | 2019 | | 2020 | | (Δ) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Metrics | Score | Adjusted Score | Score | Adjusted Score | Adjusted Score |
| Teaching Reputation Survey | 24.9 | 3.74 | 25.3 | 3.80 | 0.06 |
| Student to Academic Staff | 29.7 | 1.34 | 31.0 | 1.40 | 0.06 |
| Doctoral Degrees / Academic Staff | 83.3 | 5.00 | 83.1 | 5.00 | N/C |
| Doctoral Degrees / Bachelor Degrees | 45.7 | 1.03 | 47.3 | 1.06 | 0.03 |
| Institutional Income / Academic Staff | 94.0 | 2.12 | 93.6 | 2.11 | -0.01 |
| Research Reputation Survey | 16.7 | 3.01 | 19.2 | 3.46 | 0.45 |
| Research Income / Academic Staff | 91.7 | 5.50 | 93.3 | 5.60 | 0.10 |
| Papers / Academic Staff | 99.4 | 5.96 | 99.5 | 5.97 | 0.01 |
| Citations | 94.3 | 28.29 | 94.8 | 28.44 | 0.15 |
| Industry Income / Academic Staff | 93.5 | 2.34 | 94.0 | 2.35 | 0.01 |
| % International Academic Staff | 96.1 | 2.40 | 98.9 | 2.47 | 0.07 |
| % International Students | 63.9 | 1.60 | 68.5 | 1.71 | 0.11 |
| % publications with int. co-author | 81.5 | 2.04 | 80.6 | 2.02 | -0.02 |
| Total | | 64.3 | | 65.4 | 1.1 |

N/C = No Change

**CONSIDERATIONS**

**1. McMaster's Overall Score**

In 2020, McMaster's overall score increased by 1.1 points, to 65.4. As shown in Table 2, this growth is the result of increases across almost all of the metrics. The three largest increases came from: Research Reputation ($\Delta$ 0.45 points); Citations Metric ($\Delta$ 0.15 points) and % of International Students ($\Delta$ 0.11 points). These increases together resulted in the change in ranking from 77 to 72,

- Research Reputation Metric:
  A significant reason for the University's increased position was improved performance in the Research Reputation Survey. This indicator is worth 18% of an institution's total score and represents the second highest weighted metric in THE's ranking.

  In 2020, McMaster received a normalized research reputation score of 19.2. This represents an increase of 2.5 points compared to last year. As a result, McMaster's adjusted research score increased by 0.45 points, from 3.01 in 2019 to 3.46 in 2020. The improved performance indicates that the university has taken meaningful strides in improving its reputation, a metric which was previously noted as an area of concern.

**2. McMaster's Teaching and Research Reputation Scores**

In the 2020 administration of the WUR, McMaster experienced an increase in both reputation metrics. The teaching reputation score rose from 24.9 in 2019 to 25.3 in 2020, while the research reputation score increased from 16.7 to 19.2. The reputation scores in THE's WUR are calculated using 2 years' worth of reputation survey data from THE's Reputation Rankings. Table 3 provides a brief overview of McMaster's performance in the three most recent reputation rankings.

**Table 3: McMaster's Reputation Ranking Performance: 2017 - 2019**

|  | Overall Rank | | | Overall Votes | | | Research Votes | | | Teaching Votes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| McMaster | 187 | 210 | 158 | 129.7 | 88.1 | 151.9 | 60.4 | 42.1 | 75.0 | 69.4 | 46 | 77.0 |

Evidently, the institution saw a large increase in its ranking performance from 2018 to 2019, rising 52 positions and securing nearly double the number of votes. However, since 2018's performance was poor in comparison, the two-year average used in THE's WUR shows only a modest improvement in overall reputation. Next year, if McMaster secures the same (or higher) number of votes in the 2020 Reputation Ranking, the two-year average used in the WUR could potentially increase enough to propel McMaster into the top 70 worldwide.