

2020 Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings

BACKGROUND

Times Higher Education (THE), the publisher of World University Ranking (WUR), also publishes the World Reputation Rankings (RR). These are different rankings based on different methodologies.

The RR is an annual ranking of the world's top 100 universities in overall reputation. The information for this ranking is collected solely by THE, and it is based on the results of THE's annual teaching and research reputation survey. Unlike the QS reputation surveys, THE does not ask universities to submit names for inclusion in their survey. An overview of the method used by THE to rank the reputation of universities is as follows:

- In 2020's survey, 11,004 responses were collected across 132 countries.
- Each academic respondent is asked to name up to 15 institutions in the world they regard as best in research in their subject area, and up to 15 institutions they regard as best in teaching within their subject area. Respondents are allowed to choose their own institution.
- Votes are weighted to match proportion of researchers by country using OECD and UNESCO data.
- Finally, to create the overall Reputation Ranking, research and teaching votes are combined using a 2:1 ratio.

Please note, the university that receives the most weighted votes is assigned a score of 100, and each institution's score is then normalized to the top scoring university.

CURRENT STATUS

In the 2020 edition of the Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings (RR), McMaster ranked 129th globally, an increase of 29 spots compared to 2019 where it ranked 158th. This is McMaster's highest rank in the reputation ranking to date.

With respect to Canadian peers, the University of Toronto (20), the University of British Columbia (38) and McGill University (40) were the only Canadian institutions ranked among the top 100. For reference, a table has been provided, which shows the 2019 and 2020 reputation vote totals for the top seven Canadian institutions.

Table 1: 2020 Reputation Rank and Vote Totals, McMaster vs. Canadian Peers

	Overall Rank		Overall Votes		Research Votes		Teaching Votes	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Toronto	19	20	1305.2	1270	771.9	763.6	533.3	506.8
UBC	37	38	665.1	646	376.8	392.2	288.2	254.1
McGill	39	40	624.4	589	335.9	315.4	288.6	273.5
Montreal	129	129	188.0	188	100.8	109.1	87.2	79.0
Waterloo	137	139	173.6	186	93.0	94.9	80.6	91.5
Alberta	143	139	161.4	182	96.1	100.9	65.2	81.5
McMaster	158	129	151.9	195.2	75.0	91.5	77.0	103.7

Note: Total may not add to the sum of individual components due to weighting and rounding of votes.

Overall, McMaster received 195.2 total votes in the 2020 teaching and research reputation survey (91.5 research votes and 103.7 teaching votes). This represents an increase of 43.3 votes from the 2019 value and McMaster's all time high in terms of votes. Table 2 provides a breakdown of McMaster's 2020 reputation votes by subject level, and for comparison, 2019 information. As shown, the total number of votes the University received in 2020 increased by 43.3 (28.5%). Furthermore, McMaster only dropped votes in 2 out of the 8 subject areas below, gaining the most votes in Clinical and Health where 2020's vote total increased by 42.5.

Table 2: McMaster's Total Reputation Votes by Subject Area, 2019 vs. 2020

	2019	2020	Δ
Total Votes	151.9	195.2	43.3
Arts and Humanities	2.79	8.8	6.01
Social Sciences	17.59	7.6	-9.99
Business and Economics	9.64	13.2	3.56
Clinical and Health	62.5	105	42.5
Life Sciences	17.61	24.9	7.29
Physical Sciences	5.25	18.8	13.55
Engineering and Technology	7.17	14.9	7.73
Computer Science	9.88	2.1	-7.78

Note: Total may not add to the sum of individual components due to weighting and rounding of votes. Social Sciences is the combination of votes in Social Sciences, Psychology and Education.

WORLD RANKING IMPLICATIONS:

1. McMaster's Performance in the 2021 World University Rankings

THE uses both the teaching and research reputation surveys as metrics in their World University Rankings (WUR) which was released in September 2020. These two metrics are pivotal to an institution's performance in the WUR, as the reputation surveys account for 33% of the total score. Table 3 outlines how the increased performance in the 2020 reputation ranking impacted the 2021 World University Ranking.

Table 3: Reputation Ranking Impact on WUR

	2019/20	2020/21
Teaching Score (WUR)	25.3	31.2
Research Score (WUR)	19.2	23.6
Impact on WUR Score	N/A	+1.7

In the 2021 WUR, McMaster's overall score improved by 2.1, which resulted in breaking into the top 70 universities globally at 69th overall. As such, the increase of 1.7 points in reputation accounted for 81% of McMaster's increase in total score for the 2021 WUR.